

## **Meeting Transcript 5A**

**Miami City Commission  
March 11, 2022  
Morning Session**

Transcript of excerpt of video recording available at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OBf12S\\_LUw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OBf12S_LUw)

**PLAINTIFFS' TRIAL  
EXHIBIT**

**P6**

1:22-cv-24066-KMM

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1 Commissioner King: Of any related maps and boundaries. Today, we will be honored  
2 with a prayer from Minister Cheryl Coleman of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. Minister  
3 Coleman? It's National Women's Month, which is why I've had women give us the prayer for  
4 the month of March. Thank you for joining us.

5 Minister Coleman: Thank you Commissioner King for this opportunity and I send love  
6 and gratitude to all the amazing women. I will share and pray in my faith tradition, and I will ask  
7 you to join me in your spirit as we pray for this meeting that's about to take place. And so,  
8 Father, it is in Jesus name that I come before you on this day. First, expressing gratitude for you  
9 are the giver of life and time, and the absolute source of all of our supply. And so on today, with  
10 that gratitude and recognition, we pray, God, for this meeting that is about to take place. Your  
11 word tells us to pray for our rulers so that they would rule well and the people would live  
12 peaceably in the land. And so I pray that your spirit would rest upon all of our elected officials,  
13 these Commissioners. I pray, Father, that you would give them wisdom right now, God. I pray,  
14 Father, that you would touch their hearts right now God. I pray not only for them, for wisdom  
15 and guidance, but I pray for the people in which they represent God. I pray, Lord God, that your  
16 spirit would rest on this meeting. For every participant that would, Lord God, come, and we pray  
17 Father for an outcome, God, that would be the best because you're a God that loves all people  
18 and we thank you God as we pray this prayer, and I seal the pray with the great Hallelujah and  
19 Amen.

20 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you. Commissioner Carollo, would you please  
21 honor us with the Pledge of Allegiance.

22 Commissioner Carollo: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America  
23 and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice

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1 for all.

2 Commissioner King: Thank you. The members of the City Commission appearing for  
3 this special meeting are my vice chair, Commissioner Joe Carollo, Commissioner Ken Russell,  
4 and Commissioner Manolo Reyes, as well as myself, your chair, Commissioner King. Also  
5 appearing are the City Manager, Art Noriega, our City Attorney, Victoria Méndez, and our  
6 wonderful City Clerk, Todd Hannon, who keeps me in check. At this time, our City Attorney  
7 will please state the procedures to be followed during this special meeting.

8 Victoria Méndez: Thank you Madam Chair. Any person who is a lobbyist pursuant to  
9 Chapter 2, Article 6 of the City Code may register with the City Clerk, and may comply with the  
10 related city requirements for lobbyists before appearing before the City Commission. A person  
11 may not lobby a City official, board member, or staff member, until registering. A copy of the  
12 code section about lobbyists is available in the City Clerk's office or online at WWW Municode  
13 dot com. Any person making a presentation, formal request, or petition to the City Commission  
14 concerning real property must make the appropriate disclosures required by the City Code in  
15 writing. A copy of this code section is available in the office of the City Clerk or online at  
16 WWW Municode dot com. The City of Miami requires that any person requesting an action by  
17 the City Commission must disclose before the hearing any consideration provided or committed  
18 to anyone for agreement to support or withhold objection to the requested action pursuant to City  
19 Code section 2-8. Any documents offered to the City Commissioners that have been provided 7  
20 days before the meeting as part of the agenda materials will be entered into the record at the City  
21 Commission's discretion. In accordance with section 2-33 F and G of the City Code, the agenda  
22 and materials for the item on the agenda is available during business hours at the City Clerk's  
23 office and online 24 hours a day at WWW Miami Gov dot com. Any person may be heard by the

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1 City Commission through the Chair for not more than 2 minutes on any proposition before the  
2 City Commission unless modified by the Chair.

3 The public comment will begin at approximately 10:25 and remain open until public  
4 comment is closed by the Chair. Members of the public wishing to address the body may do so  
5 by submitting written comments online via the comment form. Please visit WWW Miami Gov  
6 dot com forward slash meeting instructions for detailed instructions on how to provide public  
7 comment using the online public comment form. The comments submitted through the comment  
8 form have been and will be distributed to elected officials and city administrations throughout  
9 today so that the elected officials can consider the comments. Additionally, the online comment  
10 form will remain open during the meeting to accept comments and distribute to the elected  
11 officials up until the Chair closes public comment. Public comment may also be provided live,  
12 here at City Hall, located at 3500 Pan American Drive, subject to any and all city rules that may  
13 be amended. If the proposition is being continued or rescheduled, the opportunity to be heard  
14 may be at such a later date before the City Commission takes action. When addressing the City  
15 Commission, the member of the public must first state his or her name, his or her address, and  
16 what item will be spoken about. Any person with a disability requiring assistance, auxiliary aids  
17 and services for this meeting may notify the City Clerk. The City has provided different public  
18 comment methods to indicate, among other things, the public support, opposition, or neutrality  
19 on items and topics to be discussed at the City Commission in compliance with section 286.0114  
20 4C Florida Statutes. The public has been given the opportunity to provide public comment  
21 during the meeting and within reasonable proximity and time before the meeting. Please note,  
22 Commissioners have been generally briefed by City staff and the City Attorney on items on the  
23 agenda today. Access to the meeting can be viewed live on Miami TV, the City's Facebook

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1 page, the City's Twitter page, the City's YouTube channel, and Comcast channel 77. The  
2 broadcast will also have closed captioning. Thank you.

3 Commissioner King: Thank you, Mr. City Clerk, would you please read the procedures  
4 for public comments.

5 Todd Hannon: The public will have two minutes to speak, there's only one item on  
6 today's agenda, so Chair, if it's the will of the Commission, you may now proceed with public  
7 comment or with a brief presentation by the consultants regarding redistricting.

8 Commissioner King: I'd like to go with public comments first and then have the  
9 presentation.

10 Commissioner Carollo: Mics on. Chair, before we proceed with either presentation or  
11 public comments, I'd like to ask for the floor so that I could delve into a few areas. Well, I'm  
12 doing my best for you to hear me. Thank you. So I can delve into a few areas that I need to  
13 clear.

14 Commissioner King: Okay, I'm going to grant you that, let me just first find out what is  
15 the will of the body after we allow Vice Chair Carollo to have his, would you like to have the  
16 presentation first or would you like public comment first? What is the will of the body? No, no,  
17 he's going to, I'm going to allow him to speak first, but after, public comment or the  
18 presentation? Public comment first, okay. We're going to do —

19 Commissioner Russell: I was going to recommend that we discuss the potential tweaks as  
20 were mentioned by Mr. De Grandy based on the last map because the public is only going to  
21 comment on the same things that they saw two weeks ago. Versus any new discussions we've all  
22 had from our new community meetings may change things, they may not. But that will allow  
23 public comment afterwards to reflect on what we've decided.

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1 Commissioner Reyes: He has a point.

2 Commissioner King: Okay, that's fine.

3 Commissioner Reyes: There's a rule in math, that the order of the factors —

4 Commissioner King: We'll have the presentation, and after the presentation, public  
5 comments. But for now, we're, I'm going to defer to Vice Chair Carollo, please go ahead.

6 Commissioner Carollo: Thank you Madam Chair. Madam Chair, members of this  
7 legislative body, and general public, I reached a point that I have had it. Some people think that  
8 they could do all kinds of things, legal and illegal, as long as they hide what they do, or some  
9 others feel that they have sufficient protection to do it. I'm briefly going to go into some of the  
10 things that I've had to endure since I've been here. For the full purpose of protecting my  
11 residents and the overall residents of the city.

12 Commissioner King: No, I think the battery is going dead, he'll give you another one.

13 Commissioner Carollo: Thank you. For the sole purpose of protecting my residents and  
14 the overall residents of the city, I'm going to try to go quickly so I can come to where we're at  
15 today. Approximately two years ago, there was a recall that was started against me. That recall  
16 started when one of my colleagues here was upset with the way the vote went, and since 2 of the  
17 other votes that were here had just recently been elected and state statute says that you cannot  
18 recall any elected official locally in the first 25% of their term. I was the turkey and a frivolous  
19 recall was started against me that we all know didn't go anywhere. But, the part that bothered me  
20 the most was that there were tens of thousands of dollars that were spent illegally, that no one  
21 knows where they came from, but I have the evidence that they were spent, and that cannot be  
22 denied or hidden anymore. At the same time, I believe that there were additional tens of  
23 thousands of dollars that were laundered so that they would be put into the recall against me.

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1 Now I find that the same people that were behind that and failed, and are even more upset  
2 because when I ran for office, they couldn't beat me and I won by 65% of the vote, are now  
3 targeting me again. A day doesn't go by that my wife is not seeing people come by the property  
4 that we live in in Little Havana taking pictures, harassing us. I can't even walk by 8th Street  
5 without those wonderful 8th Street boys sending people to take my picture, harassing me, and  
6 more. Now I find that in this redistricting, what's normal for people to have differences, have  
7 different points of views, it's a democracy, thank God, that the same tactics, the same illegal  
8 dollars, but not at the level that was spent before, are being used to defame me.

9       There have been some that have been paid so they could write little blogs and put little  
10 tweets and start the fake news and lies that I don't live in Little Havana, that I live in a property  
11 that I still owned in Coconut Grove. That in fact when I moved into Little Havana, in the house  
12 that I rent, that somehow that deed was changed when I moved there, and it was probably  
13 Beckham or Jorge Mas that owned the house, and that I'm living free rent, that I'm not paying  
14 any rent or maybe someone else that needed something from the city. If there's a house that  
15 someone rents in Miami, that has been looked at, and time and time again by people that want to  
16 harm me in the city, it's the one that I rent and it's very clear that I rent it from one of the largest  
17 rental corporations in America. That they buy homes and apartments and they rent it. For any  
18 legitimate media, legitimate media, I'd be more than happy to show every month how that  
19 corporation takes from my bank account the monthly rental payment that I make. All of my  
20 neighbors that I had the years back, when I did live in Coconut Grove, will be the first to testify,  
21 we wish he would live here, we got along with him great. He was a good neighbor, but he  
22 doesn't live here. This is the kind of campaign that has been launched against me of defamation  
23 of lies. Then all the 8th Street boys filed an injunction in federal court to prevent me from voting

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1 today because they claim that I had a conflict because of a suit they have against me. Well, that  
2 didn't take, I don't think, even 24 hours for the judge to bat it down and deny it. But, sadly, it  
3 was one of my colleagues that has been, since the recall, since this whole campaign, involved  
4 with these individuals to see how he can harm me. I do believe that I have every right to  
5 represent my district and vote like every one of us, but I do need to ask a question. Mr. Russell,  
6 do you live in the city of Miami? Where do you live at, if I may ask?

7 Commissioner Russell: Commissioner, are you interrogating me about something?

8 Commissioner Carollo: I'm asking a direct question in public.

9 Commissioner Russell: I'm getting the feeling that you are accusing me of something.

10 Commissioner Carollo: Well, are you afraid to answer the question, Mr. Russell?

11 Commissioner Russell: Sir, I live in Coconut Grove.

12 Commissioner Carollo: Okay. It's the same place that you've lived for a while?

13 Commissioner Russell: Yes, 20 years.

14 Commissioner Carollo: 20 years, well, that's funny because there's a warranty deed here  
15 from June 25th, 2021 that you sold this property in Coconut Grove, that's nine months ago, and  
16 you're still living there?

17 Commissioner Russell: I'm renting it.

18 Commissioner Carollo: You're renting, okay. I figured you would say that. Let me go  
19 into the next area before we question this. Now, I know that many of the people that are here are  
20 your supporters that you brought, and I certainly respect that.

21 Commissioner King: Hold on, hold on.

22 Commissioner Carollo: Hang him, hang him, from the highest tree.

23 Commissioner King: Commissioner —



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1 Commissioner Carollo: Yeah, this is the American way.

2 Commissioner King: Commissioner Carollo, please don't engage the audience and  
3 audience please don't make outbursts like that, or we will have you removed. Please don't make  
4 outbursts. I allowed Commissioner Carollo some time to speak, Commissioner Russell, you do  
5 not have to answer his questions if you do not want to. And Commissioner Carollo.

6 Commissioner Carollo: Thank you.

7 Commissioner King: Okay.

8 Commissioner Carollo: In your financial disclosure to the city of Miami, for the ending  
9 of the December 31st, 2020, pandemic year, the worst of the pandemic. You reported that you  
10 owed on your mortgage, on the home before you sold it in Coconut Grove, \$297,528.

11 Commissioner Russell: Madam Chair, this is inappropriate. It is completely  
12 inappropriate.

13 Commissioner Carollo: No, it is very much appropriate, it goes right to the heart of what  
14 we're discussing today.

15 Commissioner Russell: I'd like to ask that if there is a formal investigation to be had  
16 about my personal finances, this is not the forum, nor the day, nor the agenda, to do so.

17 Commissioner Carollo: It is part of the agenda we have a right to vote on this about it.

18 Commissioner Russell: I am very happy to be transparent, but this is inappropriate,  
19 100%.

20 Commissioner King: Hold on, hold on, commissioners, we can't have a back and forth  
21 fight. Commissioner Carollo, I do agree with Commissioner Russell that this is about  
22 redistricting, this meeting about —

23 Commissioner Carollo: But this goes to the heart if he has the right to vote or not. I mean

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1 they don't know if he lives here or not.

2 Commissioner King: Hold on, hold on.

3 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: And Madam Chair, Madam Chair, this is also about  
4 residency. It's also about residency.

5 Commissioner King: Okay, hold on, hold on. What I don't want to have happen is that  
6 we start fighting with each other. I'm going to allow Commissioner Carollo another 15 minutes.

7 Commissioner Carollo: That's all I need.

8 Commissioner King: And it's with respect to redistricting, he has a point to make, and  
9 Commissioner Russell, if you have something akin to what, I'm going to give him 15 more  
10 minutes.

11 Commissioner Russell: Before he continues, because he's going down a very personal  
12 path with me for the next 15 minutes.

13 Commissioner Carollo: I don't think I'll need it.

14 Commissioner Russell: And I understand this is public information.

15 Commissioner King: Hold on, hold on.

16 Commissioner Russell: I would just like to ask, Commissioner Carollo, I've seen this  
17 before, where you feel attacked personally, you attack back and I respect that. I do not have to do  
18 with these attacks on you personally about your residences and there is no reason for you to  
19 come after me at my residence. The Grove feels attacked on its boundaries, and they're fighting  
20 back, that's their prerogative, and it's your prerogative to defend yourself and fight back as well.  
21 I'm not your enemy. I am representing my residents that I serve to try to protect their boundaries,  
22 but I have nothing to do with the attacks on your home. I have nothing to do with that. I'm not  
23 spreading rumors, I am not spreading ill will. I'm not making accusations. These are assumptions

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1 that you're making from third hand rumors that you may be hearing, trust me, I'm hearing them  
2 too. But I am not piling on, I have not brought that up once on this dais about your house, ever,  
3 and I would not.

4 Commissioner Carollo: I don't believe a word you said. But beyond that, let me go on.  
5 On the end of your 2020 financial disclosure, December 31st —

6 Commissioner Russell: Chair, I believe this is outside the meeting.

7 Commissioner Carollo: — you showed you only had \$3,400 in the bank, and that you  
8 owed \$297,528 on the home. Three months later, three months later —

9 Commissioner Russell: Madam Chair, I would like him to restrict his comments to my  
10 residency of where I live.

11 Commissioner Carollo: Well, this is where I'm going.

12 Commissioner Russell: He's trying to create a storyline of my finances that has nothing  
13 to do with where I live.

14 Commissioner Carollo: This has to do with where you live.

15 Commissioner Russell: I can rent in the district, I can own in the district.

16 Commissioner King: Hold on, hold on, hold on. Do we need to take a recess for a  
17 second?

18 Commissioner Russell: Oh we may.

19 Commissioner King: Do we need to take a recess for a second?

20 Commissioner Carollo: The problem is he's scared to death of what I'm going to show  
21 next. He knows it, he knows where I'm going.

22 Commissioner King: I understand, I understand. But, we need to keep the meeting  
23 focused on redistricting, we have a lot of —

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1 Commissioner Carollo: It is. I don't know if he has a right to vote here today or not. And  
2 I've got to go through this.

3 Commissioner King: That, whether he has a right or not to vote on it is, I don't believe  
4 that is squarely for this, with his finances, with his residences —

5 Commissioner Carollo: The finances, I only touched upon that because you need to hear  
6 the rest. This is strictly residence, but you need to hear the rest.

7 Commissioner King: Okay. If he, I'm going to allow again 15 minutes —

8 Commissioner Russell: Madam Chair, I'm going to put it on the record —

9 Commissioner Carollo: It's more than I need.

10 Commissioner King: Please.

11 Commissioner Russell: Because before we go down this path, I need to put it on the  
12 record. I have not moved from my residence. I have lived in the same house for 20 years. And  
13 maybe I can clear up some confusion. I sold that house, and I'm renting from the new owners.  
14 That has nothing to do with where I live. How much I'm paying in rent has nothing to do with  
15 where I live, how much I owe on my old mortgage, how much I paid for a new property, has  
16 nothing to do with where I live. The only thing that has to do with whether I can serve this  
17 district is if I live in the boundaries, so if you have anything that has to do with where I live and  
18 where I can vote, I would love to hear it, and you will be proved wrong. But if you're just trying  
19 to smear my finances, you have no idea who owes me money, who I owe money to, how much I  
20 sold my house for and what terms, how much I rent for, but you're about to try to smear me for  
21 no reason whatsoever.

22 Commissioner Carollo: Oh no, I'm about to present the truth, sir. Black and white.

23 Commissioner King: Okay.

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1 Commissioner Russell: I filled out the forms.

2 Commissioner Carollo: Black and white.

3 Commissioner King: Okay, hold on one second, hold on one second. Because we are a  
4 body, let me take a vote with the body. Is it the will of the body for Commissioner Carollo to  
5 proceed down the line that he is preceding for 15 minutes.

6 Commissioner Russell: And know the commissioner's personal finances with no  
7 evidence but rather accusations. That's a low. We should never do that to each other up here.

8 Commissioner Reyes: Madam Chair?

9 Commissioner King: Commissioner Reyes?

10 Commissioner Reyes: Well, I think that he is being accused of not living in his district,  
11 that he couldn't vote, or that he has certain intentions. I use, I think he has a right to defend  
12 himself and to express his doubt about any one of us if are really represented or not.

13 Commissioner King: Okay.

14 Commissioner Russell: I don't understand, so you think I should have this fight?

15 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I mean I got to say?

16 Commissioner King: I'm asking you if we should allow Commissioner —

17 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I believe that every commissioner on this dais has a  
18 right to defend themselves against false accusations, including Commissioner Russell, including  
19 Commissioner Carollo, it includes all of us. It would have been false accusations —

20 Commissioner King: Okay.

21 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Wait a minute, you asked me a question, let me finish  
22 answering.

23 Commissioner King: Your answer is yes. I get it.

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1 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: My answer is yes, but the audience should not be  
2 siding with anybody here or an outburst, and if they do, they can go somewhere else. Because  
3 that is not what this is for. This is a debate. This is a debate between commissioners, it's what  
4 we do. We're all duly elected officials.

5 Commissioner King: Right, I understand.

6 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: But he has a right to expose, to espouse his point of  
7 view. And he has a right to defend himself. Because we don't know what's really happening  
8 behind the scenes. At least Commissioner Carollo is doing it directly, not in the darkness, not in  
9 the shadows.

10 Commissioner King: Well, what I'm trying to get at is what is the will of the body and it  
11 appears to me that the will of the body is to give Commissioner Carollo his 15 minutes, so he can  
12 finish —

13 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Absolutely.

14 Commissioner King: — because I don't know where it's going Commissioner Russell. I  
15 personally don't think maybe this would be the venue for it, but I understand and I would not  
16 take it away from any of you if you felt the need to have to express yourself and to clear the air.

17 Commissioner Russell: Before you vote on continuing, I have a question for the City  
18 Attorney then please?

19 Commissioner King: Go right ahead.

20 Commissioner Russell: Because these are my personal finances he's talking about.

21 Commissioner Carollo: These are public.

22 Commissioner Russell: It is. It is, but this is not the place. My question to the City  
23 Attorney is if —

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1 Commissioner Carollo: I'm going to the point of residence.

2 Commissioner King: Let him ask the question.

3 Commissioner Russell: If there is a question of ethics or impropriety for someone's  
4 ability to vote up here or whether they're voting illegally on an issue where they have a conflict  
5 or whatever's about to be accused, is there a body that is meant to investigate and adjudicate  
6 that? Or is this the body to do that? And if we are the body to do that, do we need to take special  
7 steps to create an investigative session to go into that, on another commissioner? Do we have  
8 that purview? And what is the right venue?

9 Ms. Méndez: The Commission does have the ability to investigate the matters of other  
10 elected officials through impaneling an investigative panel and all that. We've done it in the past  
11 in a slightly different way because we've delegated to someone else. So that can happen.

12 Commissioner Russell: What is the process to impanel an investigative panel?

13 Ms. Méndez: It would have to be a resolution of the Commission and then it proceeds  
14 through the charter provisions and they meet and talk about these things if there's an active  
15 investigation. I don't know if that's what's about to happen.

16 Commissioner Russell: Commissioner Carollo is going to make some sort of accusation  
17 here because he feels attacked on his own home, not by me, but for some reason he wants to  
18 come at me because it's my district that's being changed and I'm defending it. So whatever  
19 smears come up here can then be turned into some sort of investigation if impaneled properly by  
20 this board? Is that correct? But this is the venue to air it out? Is that what you're saying?

21 Ms. Méndez: If the board chooses to impanel that investigative panel of the Commission  
22 to look at acts of one of its elected officials, it can happen, yes.

23 Commissioner Russell: What I'd like to ask of the body and of Commissioner Carollo, to

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1 start with, what is the accusation? Not the lead up of smearing my family, my name, whatever,  
2 but what is the accusation that's being made so this body can decide whether they want to hear  
3 further? Is it that I don't live in my district? Or is it that I don't pay my rent?

4 Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Russell, I made the statement, the original statement. The  
5 problem is that you're petrified for me to take a few more minutes and go through this.

6 Commissioner King: Let me take the vote Commissioner Carollo, because if it's the will  
7 of the body, do I have a motion.

8 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I'll move it.

9 Commissioner King: Second? All in favor?

10 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Aye.

11 Commissioner Reyes: Aye.

12 Commissioner Russell: No, God, no.

13 Commissioner King: I know. Motion carries, so we're going to allow.

14 Mr. Hannon: Yes, motion passes four, one.

15 Commissioner King: We're going to allow Commissioner Carollo. Victoria, I understand  
16 that this is proper to allow him to speak?

17 Ms. Méndez: I don't have a crystal ball on what's, you know, but if he has something  
18 that's pertaining to redistricting in general, then yes he can speak. I just don't what —

19 Commissioner Russell: As a follow up Madam Chair, I would like the same 15 minutes  
20 to discuss Mr. Carollo's home.

21 Commissioner King: Absolutely.

22 Commissioner Russell: The legitimacy of his ability to vote.

23 Commissioner King: Absolutely.



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1 Commissioner Russell: Any ethics violations.

2 Commissioner King: Okay.

3 Commissioner Russell: Any financial violations.

4 Commissioner King: Absolutely. Okay, Commissioner Carollo, you may proceed.

5 Commissioner Carollo: Thank you Madam Chair, Commission. Can this lady here be  
6 calmed down, please, before I start? If you could go back on the clock? I made the point before  
7 how on the end of December 2020, Mr. Russell had \$3,400 in his bank account and he owed on  
8 the mortgage \$297,528. Three months later, on April 1st, 2020, the mortgage was fully paid. A  
9 few months later in 2020, on the same day, there were a series of transactions. Mr. Russell  
10 borrowed a total of \$885,000 I believe it was. The same day, he also bought a lot in Coconut  
11 Grove for \$800,000. The mortgage on both of these properties, the money he borrowed was from  
12 a private lending institution, private banking, and the same day; the private lending institution  
13 assigned that mortgage of \$885,000 to a corporation. A corporation called Pinalillo LLC, Florida  
14 Corporation says that the owner of the Pinalillo LLC is another corporation, Pudoel LLC that  
15 does have managers and owners. A very prominent, major contributor to the Republican Party of  
16 Florida, to Senator Marco Rubio, and others, strange why someone like that would want to take  
17 on the mortgage of someone running for the U.S. Senate as a Democrat. Then, in June of this  
18 past year, in fact, June 23rd, Mr. Russell sold the home for \$970,000, it was sold to a Delaware  
19 corporation that was formed two days before he sold it. There's not even a manager in the  
20 corporation, only the registered agent, which you're allowed to in Delaware because that's why  
21 people go to Delaware so you don't know who's behind it. The only thing that you can tell is the  
22 mortgage, the satisfaction of mortgage of the people he sold it to, they put a mailing address of  
23 21 Vistamar, Coconut Grove, 33143, is actually next door in Coral Gables. Vistamar is actually

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1 Vistal, with an L, mar, and the property in Vistalmar was a property that was bought in 2015, all  
2 in cash for \$3,600,000, just like Mr. Russell's property was all paid in cash to the Delaware  
3 corporation. The Vistalmar address is quite interesting because the individuals that bought that  
4 apparently live in a much more humble place these days, and they don't live in the property,  
5 haven't lived there for several years. Bottom line is that either Mr. Russell doesn't live there, and  
6 he's saying that he's got a contract, and he might, a rental contract to live there. But the point is,  
7 in all these strange transactions that I brought up here, Mr. Russell, if anyone should be the one  
8 showing that, if your saying you're paying a rent, show that contract, showing proof of the last  
9 nine months what you paid, to show indeed have paid rent. To show that you have paid market  
10 value rent, is you, because the whole series of events that are here, with some of the individuals  
11 that have been identified. You know the others that are in the Delaware corporation that you  
12 claim you rent from, it's very indicative that it has to do with something else that they need from  
13 the city of Miami. If you claim that you're living here, in the Grove, and you can show a  
14 contract, that's fine. You very well might, so you proceed at your risk that way. But at the same  
15 time, that you've gone out of your way with your friends, the same ones that you plotted the  
16 recall against me and every person up here knows that, at that time, that you were behind that  
17 with others. You can, excuse me. The lady that you had start to spread the lies that I wasn't  
18 paying my rent, that it was Beckham that owns my property and so, and gee —

19 Commissioner Russell: You have no idea what you're talking about.

20 Commissioner Carollo: — those that live in a house of glass shouldn't throw stones and  
21 that's the whole point that I want to make today. I have sat here, and even though I knew, we all  
22 knew, you conspired to hurt me, defame me, that whole ugly recall that didn't go anywhere, I  
23 still treated you decently here, I tried to work with you, I tried to ignore it. But this is where I say

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1 enough. I'm not going to take any more of your behind-from-the-back knifing, I do it up front  
2 where I look at your eyes, and this is how I'm doing it. Now, you have an obligation, if you  
3 claim that you're living there to show proof of that. You have an obligation to show all these  
4 transactions, how you got them. Why would a big Republican contributor be putting money for a  
5 mortgage for you for \$885,000? What did you get approximately \$300,000, a little under, to pay  
6 off your mortgage before, and very conveniently it was done in the same year, so when you do  
7 financial disclosures it won't be seen because what shows the \$885,000 that you borrowed so  
8 anybody wouldn't know about the \$300,000 unless they look at the mortgages. If anyone has to  
9 show how they gotten \$300,000 approximately to pay a mortgage, how they went about in  
10 getting another \$885,000 mortgage for just a few months, if anyone has to show why when you  
11 sold your house, probably, maybe, for more than it was worth at the time, which certainly high  
12 price, to a Delaware corporation. It is extremely odd that someone that buys a home like that is  
13 then going to rent it to the person that they bought it from for nine months, and obviously it's  
14 going to be a lot longer from what I see, if you're living there and you have a contract like you  
15 say. I think you need to clear all that out to the public so that everyone knows exactly where you  
16 live at and who is behind you financing your mortgages and where you live at. And of course,  
17 I'll say this to your face, you're not running for the U.S. Senate, you're doing the same thing you  
18 did in the congressional race. Fill a bank account full of money —

19 Commissioner Russell: Madam Chair?

20 Commissioner Carollo: And then you're not going to run.

21 Commissioner Russell: We've gone a little beyond the scope.

22 Commissioner Carollo: I have nothing else to say Madam Chair, except —

23 Commissioner Reyes: I have a question.

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1 Commissioner Carollo: I'll stop that so you can ask a question, yes.

2 Commissioner Reyes: I have a question. I heard your statement.

3 Commissioner King: Hold on a second Commissioner Reyes, I said that Commissioner  
4 Russell can respond and I'm going to let him respond, and then we can ask questions if  
5 necessary, I don't think it's necessary.

6 Commissioner Russell: I'll yield to the Commissioner.

7 Commissioner King: You want a question?

8 Commissioner Russell: Commissioner Reyes has a question of Commissioner Carollo or  
9 whatever he wants to say, that's fine.

10 Commissioner King: Okay.

11 Commissioner Reyes: Yes, I have a question to Mr. Carollo, you had stated that there's  
12 some — what to do people behind him, I don't know with what intentions, but you have said it,  
13 could you identify those heavy contributors to the Republican Party or whoever is behind all of  
14 this?

15 Commissioner Carollo: Commissioner Reyes, the individual that took assignment on the  
16 same day that he went and got this personal loan for \$885,000 from Benworth Capital Partners  
17 LLC, the individual that shows as the manager of the LLCs is Domingo Moreda. I've never in all  
18 my years in Miami have met Mr. Moreda, but, I know who he is, I was extremely surprised when  
19 I saw him in this whole loan transaction with Mr. Russell. Then, so that some months later, you  
20 could have Mr. Russell sell his home, top dollar, to who knows who, even though he knows who  
21 it is, and I think he knows that I know who it is. But since this is a Delaware corporation, it's  
22 supposed to be secret. We'll let it be secret for now. It does not, it's not normal in any real estate  
23 person will tell you that when someone buys a home for that value. That then they're going to

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1 turn around and give it for months and months and months to the person they bought it from to  
2 rent, you might do that for two or three months, if they need that to finalize and get their stuff  
3 together to the new house you're moving to or so. But, nine months, it's very odd. And if he  
4 claims that indeed he's renting there, then he shouldn't have any problem showing from day one,  
5 the contract, they could do it, right at the end of the day, tomorrow morning, show the contract,  
6 show every payment that you've made there, and that their market rate for rental.

7 Now, what I am going to ask the clerk to do is, Mr. Clerk, if you could send a copy of  
8 this portion of the meeting to the agent in charge of public corruption at the FBI; the agent in  
9 charge of public corruption at the IRS. The agent in charge of public corruption at the Florida  
10 Department of Law Enforcement, the State Attorney's Office and you might as well send it  
11 ahead of time to the Broward State Attorney's Office in case that they feel that they don't want  
12 to investigate it here because there might be any kind of conflicts. I'm not an investigator, but  
13 I'm also not a punching bag. Now, if this is me, some of these same fine people that he's brought  
14 here would be screaming for me to be hung by the highest tree. But it's not me, so it's fine.  
15 Everything's hunky dory. Having said that, I'd like to make one more statement, Madam Chair, I  
16 still have minutes.

17 Commissioner King: Go ahead.

18 Commissioner Carollo: What I am not going to let Mr. Russell and his group of crooked  
19 allies that have been after me for some time, is to use me as the reasoning that they could  
20 challenge whatever decision this body makes today in the courts, and come up with all kinds of  
21 baloney. If I owned a house, which I do, and everybody knows, in this district. If I did it to move  
22 in it or not. You'd be surprised on the story and the future of my house. But that's my business.  
23 The bottom line is that even though the courts then allow it, so that they don't use this to be able

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1 to sue on whatever vote this body makes in redistricting and use me as the excuse. I'm going to  
2 abstain today even though I feel I have every right to be able to vote today. I'm going to leave  
3 the future of our city, the future and having balanced districts, as was the intention when I was  
4 mayor and I brought districts to the forefront and I fought and put my political neck on the line  
5 for it to happen. I'm going to leave it in the hands of all of you to decide today, whatever it  
6 would be. But, for these people, don't let them think I'm a punching bag, and Russell, learn to  
7 fight like a man, up front, not knifing behind the back. Just because I didn't fight back on the  
8 recall and everything else, doesn't mean that I don't know how to fight. Doesn't mean that I'm  
9 scared, and the only reason that I'm not bringing up the next chapter, the tens of thousands of  
10 dollars that were spent illegally against me in this recall is that I don't wanna muddy it up. Future  
11 meeting: I'm bringing all that up. I'm bringing people that voted fraudulently that didn't live in  
12 the city and voted fraudulently just so they could vote against me, in my district, and I'm gonna  
13 show a heck of a lot of money that needs to be answered who put it in, where it came from and  
14 who laundered it.

15 Commissioner King: Thank you, Commissioner.

16 Commissioner Carollo: Having said that, I thank you all for the opportunity to speak.

17 Commissioner Reyes: Just a follow-up question, like you said.

18 Commissioner King: No.

19 Commissioner Russell: I would like them to get it all out.

20 Commissioner King: I'd like to start the redistricting meeting so I don't wanna go back-  
21 and-forth with many questions. I wanna give you your 15 minutes.

22 Commissioner Russell: This needs to be cleared up. I don't wanna go back-and-forth.

23 Commissioner King: Go ahead, Commissioner Reyes.

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1 Commissioner Reyes: This has been in some accusations and in some statements and in  
2 one of the statements that Commissioner Carollo has made was that it must be somebody or  
3 some group that they will want something from the city of Miami. That was what I understood  
4 that is economically backing Commissioner Russell and they are responsible for all these  
5 transactions. Could you be more explicit?

6 Commissioner Carollo: What do you wanna know? I have presented sufficient evidence  
7 that's filed in courts to show that there's something wrong here. Now he claims he's got a lease,  
8 he's living there. I showed he sold that home and if indeed he does have a lease, which he's  
9 gonna have to show that lease, and he should show it right tomorrow, if not today. He could  
10 make a phone call and get that copy of that lease sent here right away. If indeed he could show  
11 that lease and he very well might then he needs to show that he's been paying on that rent at  
12 market rate. That still doesn't mean that all these transactions are fine. This stinks to high  
13 heavens. It doesn't make sense any of these transactions the way they've been and especially  
14 some of the people that took over his loan. Why? Why did they take it over? What do they want  
15 from him? What do they want from the city of Miami?

16 Commissioner Russell: Interesting.

17 Commissioner Carollo: Yeah, real interesting.

18 Commissioner King: Okay, thank you, Commissioner Russell?

19 Commissioner Russell: Are you done?

20 Commissioner King: Commissioner Russell?

21 Commissioner Russell: Thank you. I've seen some pretty dark times over the last seven  
22 years and the senior commissioner here on this dais having been elected in 2015 and I thought  
23 we had it rough back then. I had no idea where this commission would go in terms of the depths

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1 of pettiness and infighting and it's really surprising to me. I think it's sad for the city of Miami  
2 because these are things that don't need to happen up here. There's always a reason when it  
3 happens up here. If it's up here it's for show and I'm gonna get into these things. I'm actually  
4 debating in my head how much I should defend myself and explain because these are simple  
5 explanations, which would probably just make it all go away, or say, "No, this is my damn  
6 business and if you wanna get it come get it." You know what? I am running for the United  
7 States Senate against Marco Rubio. This will probably be the best press I've gotten over it since I  
8 started my campaign, so I have to thank you for that.

9 Commissioner King: Have everyone removed because I've said it so many times do not  
10 clap in here. I'm trying to keep decorum.

11 Commissioner Russell: If Commissioner Carollo can bring up the fact that I'm  
12 running —

13 Commissioner King: I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about clapping in here,  
14 Commissioner Russell.

15 Commissioner Russell: I did not encourage that. I'm sorry that that excites people but  
16 please don't outburst, no boos, no claps. Please respect the chair's wishes. I've never brought  
17 that up on this dais before. It's been brought up by Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla several  
18 times.

19 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Really?

20 Commissioner Russell: Yes, that I'm running for office. Please, I'm not gonna interact  
21 with you right now.

22 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I have never interacted with you.

23 Commissioner King: Commissioner, do not engage.



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Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla; No, no, no, no. He mentioned my name.

Commissioner King: Listen, I will allow you.

Commissioner Russell: It has been brought up several times.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I recommend to you to keep me out of it, by the way.

My advice to you?

Commissioner Russell: Thank you for the threat.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Keep me out of it. That's not a threat.

Commissioner King: Commissioner?

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: My advice is to keep me out of it.

Commissioner King: Commissioner, please, do not.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: If you want to, I have agreed.

Commissioner King: Commissioner, if you would like to address him, I will give you the opportunity to do so.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Thank you. Now I want 15 minutes, too.

Commissioner King: Oh my God, okay.

Commissioner Russell: I'm sorry. It's in the minutes. It has been brought up before that I'm running for the United States Senate. It has been tried to be used to be an angle on things on there that we vote on, on this dais, and it's completely irrelevant and I've never bought it up. I have never used this dais to promote a campaign. In fact, I actually held off declaring my run back in June. I wanted to declare earlier but I was very worried about how this dais would react to me running for federal office against a Republican. Whether that would affect my ability to get things done up here so I held off and it was actually on a day that we had a very crucial CRA vote that I did declare to run and Commissioner Carollo came up to me and he said, "Marco

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1 Rubio has never done anything for Miami” and he shook my hand.

2 Commissioner Carollo: That’s a lie and you know that. That’s a lie.

3 Commissioner King: Commissioner Carollo, please don’t. Please don’t.

4 Commissioner Russell: He shook my hand.

5 Commissioner King: Let him finish.

6 Commissioner Russell: That gave me a sigh of relief. We went through. We actually were  
7 successful with what we were working on that day and I actually breathed a sigh of relief  
8 because I wanted to keep those worlds separate. I don’t want them to interact. My worry now is  
9 that because I’ve been to 37 counties. I’ve raised over a million dollars, I’m starting to get some  
10 traction. I don’t say that they’re worried I’m going to beat Marco Rubio but certainly I’m getting  
11 a lot more attacks up here and what this is right now is an accusation of financial corruption that  
12 will get in a headline that, whether true or not, will smear me and damage my campaign. That’s  
13 all I’m gonna say about the politics but I have a feeling there’s a little of that motivation in there.  
14 The other motivation is between you and I, Commissioner Carollo. We’ve had our ups and  
15 downs. We have butted heads the first day you came onto this dais and I have to say I learned a  
16 lesson pretty quickly. I had really thought you’re a force of nature and can be considered a bully  
17 because you are strong in what you believe in and the way you come out and when you’re  
18 attacked. This is what we’re seeing right now.

19 One of the very first votes we had was on board chairmanships and I voted against you to  
20 take the Bayfront Park Trust Board chairmanship. I thought Willy Gort wanted it and I was  
21 gonna provide, but it wasn’t about trying to get in a fight with you. I realized at that moment that  
22 I was the only one because I did step up and nobody else was with me. I said, “You know what?  
23 I’m gonna go to the first Bayfront Park Trust meeting and try to break bread. You said, “Did I

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1 offend you? Do you have a problem with me?" I had no history with you. I wasn't trying to pick  
2 a fight with you but clearly I had and you and I went rounds for a good year there. I have never  
3 participated in the activities to try to unseat you from your office. I have never raised a dollar for  
4 any campaign to try to recall you. I have never raised a dollar for a candidate running against you  
5 because my job up here is to get my job done for my district and in the political minority on this  
6 dais, that's very hard for me.

7 That's why I try not to wear a partisan sleeve up here and that's why I've been successful  
8 at trying to get the things that I care about done because I don't bring that up here and I don't  
9 fight with you. You may think well then he's doing it behind my back. I know you better. You're  
10 way smarter than that and you would find every detail as you've had in my finances. The only  
11 thing you don't have in there is the motivations of why and where things came from and what the  
12 answers are but I understand. It creates some questions. I'm happy to answer those.

13 It's not me, Joe. It's not me. I have learned that you and I have voted together on so many  
14 things that have helped what you're working on and that I'm working on and I would not ruin  
15 that by trying to attack you personally or politically. I've learned that lesson the hard way. We've  
16 had our fights before. I don't wanna have them anymore. I'm in my last year. I may not get  
17 another legislative thing done because I can feel the sense of this dais but I'm gonna continue to  
18 work and continue to bring the decorum and so I give you my promise as a man and I hope we  
19 have established some rapport of respect that I'm telling you the truth. I have never been  
20 involved in those oppositions. We may have mutual friends. We may have mutual enemies.  
21 There may be people I know that are going after you and vice-versa, but I have never helped  
22 them, colluded with them, given advice to them and certainly not raised a dollar, not through any  
23 mechanism or third party, to attack you. If ever asked, I would say, "No, I got work to do. I don't

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1 have time for this.”

2 Let me go on to the actual accusations, please, and I really have thought of this, my wife  
3 and I have lived in our house for 20 years now, almost, I bought it in 2002, 2003. The market is  
4 incredible right now, as we all know. I had two dogs, two cats, two, three kids and this little  
5 1400-square-foot box is getting a little bit tight, so it’s been my dream to try to figure out how to  
6 move and find a new place for my home because I don’t even have a bathroom in my bedroom. I  
7 walk down on a hall and I share it with my daughters and at the almost age of 50 I think I owe a  
8 little more to wife and I’m trying to upgrade and do a little better. It’s very hard for me right now  
9 to figure out how to pay off my mortgage, borrow enough money, buy another lot, build on that  
10 lot, sell my house and the stars aligned. It was not easy because I could not get a traditional  
11 moneylender to finance what I was looking for so I started going out to private money lenders  
12 and they don’t care about your party. They want your interest and the rate I had to pay to get that  
13 had me up to here. These are loan sharks. These are hard money lenders but I realized if I could  
14 sell my house and buy another lot that I had already had in mind, all the stars aligned, I could  
15 come outta this actually pretty good and able to build my dream home. That’s what we did. Now,  
16 how I paid off my mortgage, that’ll be a question you’ll wanna know but you don’t get those  
17 answers because you don’t have any access to what I have access to in terms of my family, my  
18 wife’s family, estate family. I can get that help and you could probably use that against me in a  
19 campaign of some whatever but it’s all legitimate. I paid off my mortgage. I got a hard-money  
20 loan to buy a new lot. I don’t even know why I’m telling all this.

21 Commissioner King: I don’t either.

22 Commissioner Russell: I believe it’s best. Come on, it’s just transparency. I’m not gonna  
23 hide behind my ability to keep information from you so that some long-term investigation comes

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1 out because honestly that gets to your goal. It's just gonna smear me further by people who  
2 wonder and doubt because all of us, everyone thinks we're corrupt. What I did was sell my home  
3 and then I was able to pay off the hard-money loan because I sold it exactly what the market was  
4 going for and I bought the lot, using the hard-money loan that the sale of my house was able to  
5 clean all that off and pretty much make me debt-free. Now all I gotta do is figure out how I can  
6 find the money to actually build my house. I've got a really nice lot that's not built but I gotta  
7 live somewhere so then I go on the hunt for where I'm gonna live and I gotta live in my district.  
8 Fortunately, the people who bought my home, which I have no connection to, they're building a  
9 few things. They bought three lots, they said, and they said mine is the last one that they're  
10 gonna renovate or whatever they're gonna do to it, so if I want to, I can live there.

11 In the sale agreement, we included within the purchase price six months that I could stay  
12 there and when that expired, I went back to them and said, "How are you coming on your  
13 building?" They said, "We're a long way off." I said, "I need more time," and they gave me  
14 another six months. We made an agreement, I prepaid them and that's where I'm living now.

15 Madam Chair, with your permission, I would like to invite Isabelle and Alba. Isabelle  
16 Andrews is my realtor. I just texted her when I saw this line of questioning coming in. She has  
17 no idea why she's here and I really, really, really apologize but this is very important for the  
18 transparency. If you wouldn't mind answering a couple of questions from my fellow  
19 commissioners. Is that all right?

20 Isabelle Andrews: Hello, my name is Isabelle Andrews and I'm a realtor with my  
21 business partner Alba Biondi. We came because we have the contract with us on our phone and  
22 we are ready for questions.

23 Commissioner Russell: Thank you so much. Do you remember the first time I

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1 approached you and asked you about what do you think my house is worth if I were trying to sell  
2 it?

3 Isabelle Andrews: Absolutely, yes.

4 Commissioner Russell: Yes and do you remember the value back then? This wasn't the  
5 time we sold it. I gave up for six months or whatever.

6 Isabelle Andrews: Oh, right. We gave you a market analysis and a value for your home  
7 and you decided to wait a little bit and it was a good decision. The market went up and when we  
8 gave you a new value, you agreed and we put your house on the market.

9 Commissioner Russell: I want to remember that you valued it at around 700,000.

10 Isabelle Andrews: At that time, yes.

11 Commissioner Russell: Yes, I bought it, and this is all public record, 20 years ago for  
12 419,000 so that might seem like a good jump but we knew the market was going up.

13 Isabelle Andrews: Correct.

14 Commissioner Russell: It didn't solve my problems so I waited. Then the market got  
15 hotter and I reached back out to you, correct?

16 Isabelle Andrews: Correct.

17 Commissioner Russell: When the market got higher, I reached back out to you and said,  
18 "What do you think we could sell the house for?"

19 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, we met again. We gave you a new market analysis and we gave  
20 you the value and you decided that it was a good price and we put it on the market and we sold  
21 the property on the open market.

22 Commissioner Russell: Well, it was at the early part of the boom and you thought we  
23 might sell it in a week or a day and you put a price, I wanna say 1.1.

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1 Alba Biondi: One million hundred.

2 Commissioner Andrews: One million, right.

3 Isabelle Andrews: No, one million one hundred.

4 Commissioner Russell: One million one hundred and it unfortunately did not sell. It sat  
5 on the market.

6 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, we had a lot of activity. We had I believe several offers and we  
7 settled for the price you found acceptable.

8 Commissioner Russell: How many people would you say visited the house during that  
9 time that you showed it?

10 Isabelle Andrews: Well, I listed hundreds. We had several open houses and actually the  
11 first time we had an open house, we had a line of people waiting outside.

12 Commissioner Russell: Did you put the sign up in the front yard?

13 Isabelle Andrews: Absolutely the first day.

14 Commissioner Russell: Traditional method.

15 Isabelle Andrews: We did everything that we have to do legally. We were obliged to do  
16 some things for our trade. We did everything we were supposed to do.

17 Commissioner Russell: The end buyer that decided to make an offer, where did they  
18 come from?

19 Isabelle Andrews: From the open market. We advertised your property everywhere and  
20 they were interested. They asked to look at your property and actually Alba did the showing.  
21 That's why I Alba came because she's more, was —

22 Commissioner Russell: Did I introduce you to them or did you introduce them to me?

23 Isabelle Andrews: Never, never, never. The buyer came through due process. We

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1 advertised at your home. He saw the advertisement. He came and visited your house. Did he visit  
2 the house?

3 Alba Biondi: Yes.

4 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, he did visit your house.

5 Commissioner Russell: Now if I remember correctly, we were a little bit apart on the  
6 price and we had the question about whether I could stay there because I wasn't finding rental  
7 rates. It was getting really high and we didn't wanna move and everything.

8 Isabelle Andrews: Actually, we have done that several times with our sellers because on  
9 the seller's market when you get an offer, but sometimes people say, "I don't know where to go,"  
10 so it's part of the negotiation to stay in a house sometimes for free, sometimes for a low rent, but  
11 that happens quite often with our negotiations.

12 Commissioner Russell: Got it, so in the end, it was unorthodox, but you introduced me  
13 and we sat together with the buyer.

14 Isabelle Andrews: Absolutely, it has nothing to do with you. You never advised me to  
15 contact the buyer. You never did anything. It came through due process and normal transaction.

16 Commissioner Russell: If I remember right, they agreed to a price under what we were  
17 asking for but I said if we can stay in the house for additional months.

18 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, it was part of the negotiation. It was a normal negotiation.

19 Commissioner Russell: Was that captured in the sale agreement? Did it say that?

20 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, oh, yes. We have a contract and we can show the contract, if  
21 you'll allow us.

22 Commissioner Russell: If I remember, it was six months and 4 or 5,000-a-month.

23 Isabelle Andrews: Sure, sure, sure, absolutely. It's in writing, signed by you and by the



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1 buyer and attorneys were involved.

2 Commissioner Russell: Got it and when then when the six months finished up and we  
3 realized of course we're not anywhere near building our new home, we didn't do the extension  
4 of the rental through you but I think I reached out to you.

5 Isabelle Andrews: You did not have to because we did not represent you at that time. The  
6 lease was expired. It was a lease and after you renewed your lease with us, enough. That's your  
7 freedom.

8 Commissioner Russell: Right, if I remember right, what we agreed with the new owner is  
9 that we would get another six months but he would give me a little discount because I would pay  
10 all of it up front and I would cover everything, like if the air conditioner broke or leaks or  
11 whatever.

12 Isabelle Andrews: We did not see it.

13 Commissioner Russell: You don't even know about that. Okay.

14 Isabelle Andrews: We did not see the deal we had but it's normal. That happens. What  
15 you did happens all the time with our clients. We represent sellers. Sometimes we represent  
16 buyers and sellers, in that case. That's why that happened, but who gave us a business? The  
17 seller gave us a business, so we represent the seller in our best ability and for Mr. Russell, it was  
18 good for him to stay in his house, so we negotiated that. We did that several times. Actually, with  
19 a seller's market, it's quite easy to get that deal.

20 Commissioner Russell: Thank you. Final question, if I could, Madam Chair, the lender  
21 that we paid off, the short-term lender, the high-interest lender, were you involved? I can't  
22 remember.

23 Isabelle Andrews: Your attorney.

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1 Commissioner Russell: Okay, that's right. Got it.

2 Isabelle Andrews: We were not involved, not us.

3 Commissioner Russell: In the sale of this house, that loan got paid off.

4 Isabelle Andrews: Yes, I believe it's in the head. I have to review the head statement,  
5 which is a closing statement.

6 Commissioner Russell: Thank you, so Madam Chair, I will not use any of them. Thank  
7 you so much, Isabelle. Thank you for coming down, Alba. I appreciate it. I will not use any of  
8 my time to attack Joe Carollo or his house or whether he should vote. That's never been my  
9 argument or attack on redistricting. A lot of people are bringing that up. He has a lot of enemies  
10 of his own making. I am not one of them. You are chasing ghosts with me but it is a very  
11 standard feeling when being attacked to attack back on the same thing you're being attacked on  
12 and I understand that. If you think I'm going after your house, you're come after mine. If I kill  
13 your dog, you're gonna kill my cat. I get it. We're not having that war because this isn't about  
14 you and me. This is about the district lines and, man, I am really fighting to try to keep the Grove  
15 together. I'm not using dirty tactics to do it. I don't think I'm gonna be able to pull a rabbit outta  
16 the hat here but everything you just threw right now could paint a picture. I could see where  
17 those lines could point that way but it's not there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you. Madam City Attorney, would you please  
19 read into the record so that everyone knows that what just transpired here, although it may not be  
20 what we wanted to have happen today is absolutely within the purview of this body?

21 Ms. Méndez: Pursuant to Section 14, the commission may investigate official  
22 transactions, act and conduct. The mayor, city commission or any committee thereof may  
23 investigate the financial transactions of any office or department of the city government and the

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1 official acts and conduct of any city official and by similar investigations may secure information  
2 upon any matter.

3 Commissioner King: Thank you.

4 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Did you read Section 14? You did not.

5 Ms. Méndez: I read the first part, which I thought was pertinent of Section 14.

6 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I want you to read the whole thing into the record,  
7 please.

8 Ms. Méndez: Okay, the whole thing. In conducting such investigations, the mayor, city  
9 commission or any committee thereof may require the attendance of witnesses and the  
10 production of books, papers and other evidence and for the purpose may issue subpoenas, which  
11 shall be signed by the presiding officer of the city commission or the chair of such committee or  
12 as the case may be which may be served and executed by any police officer.

13 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Thank you, Madam Chair.

14 Commissioner Russell: I just wanted to put a ribbon on my statement because I realized I  
15 didn't actually address the actual accusation. I had not contact with the lender who lended me  
16 money other than the high interest rate they were willing to pay in order to lend me that money. I  
17 had no contact or information or awareness of or relationship with the buyer who bought my  
18 house, which was brought to me by a traditional real estate agent who showed the house in a  
19 very traditional manner and there is nothing nefarious going on with the cashflow within my  
20 personal and there is certainly no reason that I cannot vote on this dais and live in my home that  
21 I've lived in for 20 years. It's not mine anymore but rent it and I'm there within the district  
22 representing the district.

23 Commissioner King: Thank you at this time I'm going to start public comment. Please

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1 line up.

2 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Are we going? I'm sorry, Madam Chair. Can Mr. De  
3 Grandy at least present his plan?

4 Commissioner King: Oh, is that what we said? We said you would. I forgot.

5 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Yes, ma'am.

6 Commissioner King: I'm sorry. I forgot.

7 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: The poor guy is sitting there.

8 Commissioner King: Okay, please present your plan.

9 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Mr. Cody, too.

10 Commissioner King: Yes, please, gentlemen, present your plan.

11 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 Commissioner King: I forgot.

13 Mr. De Grandy: Give me one second, Madam Chair, for the computer to be set up.

14 Commissioner King: One second, Mr. De Grandy.

15 Mr. De Grandy: Good morning, commissioners. For the record, this is now the fifth  
16 advertised public hearing we've had on redistricting and additionally since our February 25th  
17 public hearing, you have each conducted a community meeting in each one of your districts to  
18 hear from your constituents.

19 Now, first permit me to recap some of the discussion that occurred at the prior hearing  
20 and the direction we were provided. At the February 25th hearing, we presented our revised plan.  
21 After our presentation, there was additional public comment and discussion by this commission.  
22 The commission voted 4 to 1 to make the revised plan the base plan for consideration of any  
23 additional changes. Now because you voted to make the revised plan the base plan for further

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1 consideration, we have not made any changes at this time, pending further policy direction from  
2 this commission. Now so far, only two commissioners have suggested additional changes to the  
3 base plan. At the request of these commissioners, we have modeled it and provided them with  
4 some preliminary numbers showing the effect of those changes.

5 Chair King informed us she wanted part of the area we had moved from D5 to D1 along  
6 the riverfront restored to D5. Chair King's preliminary request would put the overall deviation  
7 slightly above 10% and lower the Black VAP to 49%, but this could be remedied by making  
8 additional changes to the plan in order to rebalance D1's population and increase D5's Black  
9 voting age population. However, we will need additional policy direction from this commission  
10 as to where to go to rebalance the districts.

11 Also, Commissioner Russell has requested restoring all areas south of US 1 that were  
12 assigned to D3 and D4 back into D2. He has also proposed moving an area further north but still  
13 south of US 1 into D3 to rebalance population. From south to north, this would include the area  
14 from where US 1 meets 95, using South Miami as the east boundary, all the way to the river on  
15 the north. Commissioner Russell's proposed change would make the overall deviation  
16 approximately 9.3, which is still a defensible plan. After my presentation, we look forward to  
17 getting direction from this commission as to what of those changes, if any, you wish to make.

18 Now, during the February hearings, there were allegations that the base plan was  
19 somehow racist as a result of moving 114 Black residents into D4. Subsequent thereto, there  
20 have also been media articles making the same allegations. As your consultants, Mr. Cody and I  
21 believe that we have an obligation to respond to those allegations on the record.

22 First, to be clear, in the four public hearings we've had before you so far and in the five  
23 community meetings you have all conducted in your districts, the only allegation of racism

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1 results from the proposed movement of 1,597 residents from the south of US 1 to D4, which  
2 includes those 114 Black residents. To put it in perspective, Black residents comprise only 7.5%  
3 of D2. They clearly could not constitute a majority in a single-number district. Moreover, those  
4 114 Black residents are only 7% of the total population proposed to be moved from south of US  
5 1 to District 4.

6         Nevertheless, I think it's important to present additional facts on the record in order to  
7 provide more context and to see if the allegation of racism has merit. Now, the demographics of  
8 the city are as follows. It is approximately 70% of the population is Hispanic. Approximately  
9 16.3 of the population is Black and approximately 11.9% is Non-Hispanic white. In a five-  
10 member commission, the base plan provides for one majority-Black district, which is 20% of the  
11 commission. It provides for three majority-Hispanic districts, which is 60% of the commission.  
12 And it provides for one competitive district in which there is no majority community.

13         Now, for those of you who would like to read case law, the U.S. Supreme Court case of  
14 Johnson vs. De Grandy is enlightening, in this discussion, because in that case the U.S. Supreme  
15 Court ruled that there was no violation of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act where minority  
16 voters form effective voting majorities in a number of districts roughly proportional to their  
17 respective shares in the voting-age population.

18         Now, in regard to those 114 Black residents, the Miami Herald Editorial Board recently  
19 issued its opinion regarding the city's base redistricting plan. In this editorial, the Herald made  
20 the following statement, quote: "We wonder what kind of representation those 114 Black  
21 residents will get in overwhelming Hispanic District 4." The statement is clearly meant, in my  
22 opinion, to imply the residents of one race or ethnicity cannot be effectively represented in  
23 districts where the majority community is of a different race or ethnicity.

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1 And so it may also be enlightening to look closer at the composition of the five city of  
2 Miami districts to see whether that is true. In D1, there are 9,762 Black residents represented by  
3 a Hispanic commissioner in a majority-Hispanic district. In D2, there are 6,968 Black residents  
4 represented by a non-Black commissioner in a district that is 70% non-Hispanic white and 48%  
5 Hispanic. In D3, there are 4,700 Black residents represented by a Hispanic commissioner in a  
6 majority-Hispanic district, in D4, there 2,774 Black residents represented by a Hispanic  
7 commissioner in a majority-Hispanic district.

8 In total, there are over 24,000 Black residents in districts where Black residents are not  
9 the majority of the district. In D5, there are 34,571 Hispanic residents represented by a Black  
10 commissioner in a Black-majority district. In D2, there are 45,415 Hispanic residents represented  
11 by a non-Hispanic commissioner. In total, there are close to 80,000 Hispanics in districts that are  
12 not majority Hispanic.

13 Now, surprisingly, neither the Miami Herald Editorial Board nor any of those alleging  
14 that the plan is racist has noted any of these statistics as an issue. Now, some would say that the  
15 statistics I've just presented on the record are indicative of more desegregated and diverse living  
16 patterns that continue to develop in Miami, which I believe is a good thing. But, as I stated a  
17 minute ago, in the four public hearings and the five community meetings you have had, the only  
18 allegation of racism results from the proposed movement of 114 Black residents who are  
19 currently represented by a commissioner who is not Black to a district that is represented by a  
20 commissioner who is not Black.

21 Now, in the last 30 years, I've been involved in redistricting and reapportionment of  
22 congressional, state senate and state house plans as well as school board and municipal plans. In  
23 the 1990 redistricting cycle, I successfully sued the Florida Legislature for violation of the

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1 Voting Rights Act, in the case of De Grandy versus Wetherell. As a result of that lawsuit, for the  
2 first time in a hundred years since Reconstruction, there were three African American members  
3 elected to Congress in Florida where for a hundred years, there had been none. I've also  
4 successfully litigated in defense of congressional and state legislative plans that complied with  
5 the Constitution and the Voting Rights Act. But in light of the statistics I've just put on the  
6 record, I would respectfully submit that you do not have to be a redistricting expert to conclude  
7 that the allegation of this plan is somehow racist is simply false and inflammatory.

8 Commissioner Carollo: It is.

9 Mr. De Grandy: The facts are that this plan complies with both the 14th Amendment and  
10 the Voting Rights Act. Now that is not say that the movement of population from south of US 1  
11 into other districts is not a valid policy issue for you to debate. Previous commissions have made  
12 policy decisions which divided traditional neighborhoods, like Flagami, Little Havana,  
13 Allapattah and Shenandoah. And those same commissions have made policy decisions that  
14 resulted in maintaining US 1 as a boundary between districts. It is now up to this commission to  
15 decide what is the best policy to implement in the 2020 redistricting cycle in order to balance the  
16 population among districts as is required by the Constitution.

17 Now, as we discussed, Madam Chair, in the February hearing, we brought our computers.  
18 We're ready to address any changes you propose. As to specific changes, we will request a short  
19 recess so that we could make those proposed changes in the software program. We can then  
20 come back to you, and advise as to the impact of those changes and our opinion regarding to  
21 whether it complies with the law and the Constitution. With that, Madam Chair and  
22 commissioners, I look forward to your discussion and any additional direction you wish to  
23 provide.



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1 Commissioner King: One second, now. I'm gonna go with the will of the body. Would  
2 you each like to make a comment now? Is that the will of the body?

3 Commissioner Russell: I have questions about what he said specifically.

4 Commissioner King: Wait, please.

5 Commissioner Russell: Before, not a comment or an amendment or an action. I just  
6 wanna understand better what he said.

7 Commissioner King: Okay because what I'd like to do is get the public comments so do  
8 you have to make them now or can you wait until after public comment?

9 Commissioner Reyes: Well, I want, I want —

10 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: You will wait for the questions. Well, no, you have to  
11 go in order. It's a 1, 2, 3 or 4.

12 Commissioner Russell: There's something I didn't understand in what he said.

13 Commissioner Reyes: I'm always last but the thing is that I feel like I was attacked and I  
14 wanna make sure that everybody knows, you see?

15 Commissioner King: Hold on.

16 Commissioner Russell: Mine's a question.

17 Commissioner King: I'm gonna go with, are you?

18 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: I'm District 1.

19 Commissioner King: What do you wanna say? Are you gonna ask a question?

20 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla : I agree with you. I want to agree with you that we  
21 have to have public comment but is the public comment on the plan that we've already voted or  
22 on the revised plan that we're gonna have issues with because there's gonna be a huge debate on  
23 that revised plan, right? The issue is, is the public comment on the plan we voted on already or is

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1 it gonna be public comment about the potential changes to the plan we voted on already?

2 Commissioner King: Both.

3 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: That's my question.

4 Commissioner King: Public comment on redistricting.

5 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Do they know what the changes are?

6 Commissioner King: Whatever they want to say. Are you gonna present the changes?

7 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Right, that's my point.

8 Mr. De Grandy: Ma'am, if I am given direction.

9 Commissioner King: Finish your presentation.

10 Mr. De Grandy: I have basically, you know, explained the two proposed —

11 Commissioner King: Show that. Put the map up.

12 Commissioner Russell: Just a quick question.

13 Mr. De Grandy: The map is up.

14 Commissioner King: Go ahead, Commissioner Russell.

15 Commissioner Russell: Thank you. I saw a few slides about racist accusations. Those  
16 accusations weren't made anywhere on this dais. Is that correct? Where do those accusations  
17 come from?

18 Mr. De Grandy: Not by the dais.

19 Commissioner Russell: Those were from public comments during your meetings or from  
20 the press, what was it from?

21 Mr. De Grandy: These have been —

22 Commissioner Reyes: In front of us.

23 Mr. De Grandy: — public comments that have been made in the public comment

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1 sections. Racist allegations have been made in media reports.

2 Commissioner Russell: Got it, but for the record, no one on this dais has utilized the  
3 accusation of racism as a motivation for any of the lines that we are drawing. Am I correct? In  
4 our record, I don't recall it.

5 Mr. De Grandy: Not your debate, so far, no.

6 Commissioner Reyes: May I?

7 Commissioner King: Yes, please.

8 Commissioner Reyes: Yes, because this is the second time that I've heard that. There was  
9 a lady. She's a pastor. The first time that we were having this meeting, she also brought the fact.  
10 I mean she made the statement, how are you gonna get people from Coconut Grove and give it to  
11 a Hispanic commissioner? Now, I got the statements that they have injected. They have brought  
12 race into this argument, which is totally uncalled and not needed and it is completely divisive.  
13 We cannot allow that and every time that we don't like something, we can — Stop using the race  
14 card in order to gen-, what's really sad is that the race card is being used by white people, you  
15 see.

16 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: [Laughter]

17 Commissioner Reyes: That is, that is why really it is sad. Okay. To answer the question  
18 — and Miami Herald, shame on you for that editorial and asking how 114 Black residents are  
19 gonna be represented by a Hispanic, a Cuban, to be more specific. Well, the same way that I  
20 represent 2,774 Black residents, some of them that are my neighbors in Flagami. And I think that  
21 every one of us and every one of you, regardless of your race or where you come from, you will  
22 represent your district as if there were no race and you're gonna be colorblind, you see? And we  
23 should do away with using the race card when you are not in agreement with some changes,

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1 whatever it is. I think it is sad that we bringing race into this equation.

2 The only race that we're gonna bring to this equation, I'm gonna tell you what it is. We  
3 have to keep diversity on this dais and that's why we have districts. And we have to say and do  
4 everything that is needed to make sure that there is diversity in this dais. If not, if we are not  
5 gonna do whatever it takes to have diversity in this dais, let's do away with the districts then and  
6 then everybody will be — we will have five Hispanics right here since we are 70% of the  
7 population. And in order to avoid that, the districts were created. And I will always — my main  
8 concern and I have said it and I repeat it — my main concern is to save that seat that now is  
9 occupied by Ms. King. And I will vote for any plan that will save that seat. Is that clear? So let's  
10 get race out of this.

11 Commissioner King: Thank you, Commissioner Reyes.

12 Commissioner Russell: Just to clarify what may lead to that mischaracterization of  
13 racism, Mr. De Grandy, how many African American residents are in the West Grove, more or  
14 less?

15 Mr. De Grandy: West Grove, Steve, do you have that statistic?

16 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Five hundred and something.

17 Mr. Cody: Well, it depends upon where you define the West Grove.

18 Commissioner Russell: West of McDonald.

19 Mr. Cody: Well, in all of the Grove, from Rickenbacker down to the city boundary I  
20 think it's 2,067.

21 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: That's not correct.

22 Commissioner King: Commissioner, commissioner.

23 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: That's not correct.

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Commissioner King: Okay, but let him — he's the expert.

Mr. Cody: No, 2,677. Excuse me.

Commissioner King: Let him answer.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Well, he's trying to find the West Grove.

Commissioner King: Let him speak and then we'll recognize you.

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: All right.

Commissioner King: Okay.

Mr. De Grandy: Coconut Grove defined as.

Commissioner Russell: Basically, the NCD 2.

Mr. Cody: It's 2,647.

Commissioner Russell: In the NCD 2, not including NCD 3? There's two NCDs. The NCD 3 is rest of Grove. NCD 2 is West Grove.

Mr. De Grandy: I don't have the one, that breakout.

Commissioner Russell: You don't know that barrier. The boundary is basically McDonald, which is 32nd, everything west of that, all the way to US 1 and Coral Gables. With the southern border being Franklin.

Mr. De Grandy: Sorry, we only have the statistics for the entire Grove and that's 2,647.

Commissioner Russell: The population of 114, which is in the Bird Avenue triangle, would you say that they are part of a cohesive voting bloc in the West Grove? Would you say that the African Americans of the West Grove vote in a similar manner for similar interests?

Mr. De Grandy: As the rest of the Grove? Yes.

Commissioner Russell: Yes, because the issues, of course, displacement, gentrification, social justice, affordable housing, they're looking for not a Black commissioner, but they're

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1 looking for someone to solve those issues and they vote as a bloc. Now, if 114 were taken into  
2 another district, and it's not say that it's Hispanic, white or anything else, but they are now no  
3 longer part of this cohesive voting bloc. Does it dilute the ability of that bloc to have the strength  
4 of its voice to be heard? And of the 114 that's moved into what is a 90% Hispanic district, will  
5 they be able to advocate in the same way for those issues that they care about with their actual  
6 direct neighbors in the West Grove?

7 Mr. De Grandy: Well, in terms of whether they'd be able to advocate, I would assume  
8 they would.

9 Commissioner Russell: Effectively, as a bloc?

10 Commissioner King: Commissioner Russell, I don't know that Mr. De Grandy can  
11 answer that question.

12 Commissioner Russell: I thought that's the core of this —

13 Commissioner King: Right, but he's handling the redistricting. I don't know if he can  
14 answer the intent of voters and how they will advocate in — Do you have another question?

15 Commissioner Russell: Yes, then my point is, I believe that by removing that 114 — if  
16 we don't have to, we shouldn't remove a single African American from a cohesive voting bloc of  
17 an African American community that is under the attack of displacement and gentrification. We  
18 should do our best efforts to hold them together. If they need to be broken up by law of  
19 equalization of districts, absolutely.

20 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: That you can represent, right?

21 Commissioner Russell: What?

22 Commissioner King: Commissioner, you're out of order.

23 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Well, I'm waiting to be recognized.

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1 Commissioner Russell: They are a cohesive voting bloc with a natural boundary of US 1  
2 and that's why — my worry is that as they get sent into another district, they lose their voice.  
3 Not that they get poor representation. Not that they will be treated poorly —

4 Commissioner Reyes: Maybe better.

5 Commissioner Russell: — by another group —

6 Commissioner King: Commissioner, please, please.

7 Commissioner Russell: — but that they lose their ability to advocate with their like-  
8 minded voting bloc in their neighborhood, their physical neighborhood.

9 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: It's a straw-man argument and whenever you're ready  
10 to recognize me, I will. Thanks.

11 Commissioner King: Wait 'til he finishes. Are you finished, commissioner?

12 Commissioner Russell: I'm finished. That's the basic argument of why I don't believe the  
13 Bird Avenue triangle should be removed from the West Grove.

14 Mr. De Grandy: If I may respond to that.

15 Commissioner King: Please.

16 Mr. De Grandy: It's not just the 114. The 1597 may have different points of view than  
17 some of the folks on the other side of US 1. I mean, we're actually moving more African  
18 Americans into D4 from the north of US 1 than we are from the south.

19 Commissioner Russell: Into where?

20 Mr. De Grandy: From the north of US 1, we're actually moving more African American  
21 residents into D4 than we are from the south. My job, commissioner, in regard to my  
22 presentation, as a consultant, if there is an allegation that the plan is racist and therefore flawed  
23 and illegal, it is my responsibility to respond on the record to that.

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1 Commissioner Russell: We're not saying that.

2 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: You just did.

3 Commissioner Russell: No, and then I must respond. I'm not saying that your plan is  
4 racist. I am saying that your plan may marginalize a community because the African American  
5 residents on the north side of US 1 have a complete different issue than the African Americans  
6 on the south side of US 1.

7 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: How do you know? How do you know that?

8 Commissioner King: Hold on.

9 Commissioner Russell: I believe this is a healthy discussion.

10 Commissioner King: Commissioner, you're out of order.

11 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Okay, thank you.

12 Commissioner King: Mr. Manager, what's the timeline on me having the ability to cut the  
13 mics? No, I can't. This is an example of why I need that.

14 Male Speaker: Mr. Manager, I'm sorry. We can't hear you.

15 Commissioner Russell: But I think this is healthy.

16 City Manager: I'll get back to her on the timeline.

17 Commissioner King: Commissioner Russell, you have expressed and I allowed you to but  
18 you've made that clear to Mr. De Grandy and Mr. Cody, right? You understand? You understand  
19 where he's coming from? This is important to him and his constituents with respect to the 114.

20 Commissioner Russell: But he mentioned something that I believe is incorrect and I'd  
21 like to challenge it.

22 Commissioner King: I don't think we need to be so sensitive about every single word  
23 that's said. What's important is that you don't want your district cut up.



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1 Commissioner Russell: Why is it important? Because I'm trying to make the case to all of  
2 you why it shouldn't be.

3 Commissioner King: No, I understand and I'm not trying to cut you off but I don't think  
4 we need to go back-and-forth about —

5 Commissioner Russell: Last statement then?

6 Commissioner King: — racism and no one up here is trying to be racist.

7 Commissioner Russell: That's my point.

8 Commissioner King: No one is trying to be racist up here.

9 Commissioner Russell: It's not. If I could just then make my last point?

10 Commissioner King: Right, so you know sticks-and-stones.

11 Commissioner Russell: No, I'm not trying to cast that.

12 Commissioner King: Okay, I'm just saying.

13 Commissioner Russell: African Americans who live in Golden Pines are not facing the  
14 same level of gentrification and displacement as African Americans south of US 1 as they are  
15 surrounded by Coral Gables on one side and the wealthier part of Coconut Grove on the other.  
16 They have a very specific mission, which is not based on color. It's just based on trying to stay to  
17 live there and that's their cohesive voting bloc. Even though they are predominantly African  
18 American, that's their cohesive voting bloc and that's why I'm trying to keep them all together.  
19 Done.

20 Commissioner King: Good, thank you.

21 Mr. De Grandy: As I said, that's a policy issue for all of you to debate.

22 Commissioner King: Right, now, commissioner?

23 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Nope.

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Commissioner King: Nothing? Are you sure?

Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Nothing, no.

Commissioner Reyes: May I answer?

Commissioner King: Do you have to?

Commissioner Reyes: Yes, I have to.

Commissioner King: You have to.

Commissioner Reyes: You had mentioned it and you're taking the victim's position here that there is a difference in gentrification in Coconut Grove than it is in Golden Pines. That's not true. The residents in Golden Pines are being gentrified but all of those new investors that are coming, being them Black or being they Hispanic, you see? And I'm gonna make this very clear, you see? I didn't ask for that sliver. But it irks me to any insinuation that they are not gonna be represented because it was given to me. I didn't ask for it, you see? As a matter of fact, I don't want it if it is gonna create problems. The only reason that I will accept that is to save that seat [pointing to Commissioner King] that is there, okay? But to make those statements that they don't have the same need, yes, they do. They do. They're not gonna be gentrified? Yes, they are. They are being gentrified. That there are more Blacks in Golden Pines, than there are in that sliver? Yes, it's true. That I have close to 3,000 to 2,700 Black residents that are living in D4 and that is true and they are being represented by me. There is no difference. When they're gonna vote, they're gonna vote for issues that affect everybody, you see? In a general election, the same pattern of voting that any population, be it Cuban or be it white, whatever it is, if it is Black, Cuban, they are gonna follow the same pattern of election regardless of the district that they're living in. They vote Democrat or they vote Republican or they vote conservative or they vote liberal and that's it, you see? Because you live in certain areas, you're not gonna change that

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1 you're gonna vote. I mean, It is logical, you see. I mean, I think that we have gone through this  
2 before but the only reason that I am using this time is to make sure, because I'm sick and tired.  
3 I've been here longer than you've been living in Coconut Grove. I've been in this city. You see, I  
4 knew Coconut Grove when Coconut Grove was a place that people came to be high and this  
5 peace and love, and all of that, you see. I remember that. I remember that, okay? It was a bunch  
6 of hippies living here. I remember that, you see. I remember that. And one thing that I hate is that  
7 people use the race card in order to make whatever positions they have go their way. Please don't  
8 do that, because that creates more division. And we don't need more division in this city. What  
9 we need is all of us to get together, and try to get people elected, and to demand that we all are  
10 well represented, and every decision is to favor and improve the quality of life of the residents.  
11 That's all we need. Okay. Leave race out of this question.

12 Commissioner King: Do you have any more presentation? Can you have your map up  
13 and show us from the last. Have you made any changes since the last?

14 Mr. De Grandy: We have modeled both requested the changes from you and from  
15 Commissioner Russell. If you want we could put those up.

16 Commissioner King: Please, can you and explain them.

17 Mr. De Grandy: Let's show, we'll show Commissioner Russell's first. Yours,  
18 Commissioner, as we discussed, we had done the dividing line at 7th, but you indicated that there  
19 may be additional changes you'd wanna do, so we're just gonna show what the proposal is and  
20 then we can have a recess and have those additional modifications.

21 Commissioner King: Okay.

22 Mr. De Grandy: Madam Chair, whenever you're ready.

23 Commissioner King: I'm ready. Please proceed. I don't need a quorum for them to do

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1 pre-, and there's Commissioner Russell. There we are. They're here.

2 Commissioner Russell: I apologize that was a call from my wife saying what is going on?

3 Mr. De Grandy: Okay, so the first alternative was to keep the area south of US 1 in D2  
4 and then adjust D3. Next slide. Those are the movements that were proposed by Commissioner  
5 Russell. If you look at it, it would take out both the areas that were given to D4 and D3, put them  
6 back into D2. Commissioner Russell proposed an area beginning right where US 1 forks to do 95  
7 and that area would use South Miami Avenue as a boundary all the way up to the river. Next  
8 slide. You can see the deviation goes up to 9.3. Actually where before Commissioner Russell's  
9 district was the high mark for overall deviation and Commissioner I believe, D5 was the low  
10 mark. Now the high mark would be D3 at over 5.42 deviation. The low mark would be D4,  
11 which was depopulated and is now at 3.9 deviation. Your overall deviation would be 9.3.

12 The plan still provides for an African American majority district and three African  
13 American — Hispanic districts. Thus it would comply with the federal Voting Rights Act. In  
14 terms of the overall deviation, it's kind of pushing the limit. What the case law has said is that  
15 there needed to be rational bases for deviations under 10%. You can certainly make the argument  
16 that keeping the Grove together is a rational basis by which that deviation would increase.

17 Commissioner King: Does that conclude your presentation?

18 Mr. De Grandy: That concludes the presentation as to Commissioner Russell's proposal.  
19 If you can give me a couple minutes, we will load up your proposal. In this alternative, what we  
20 had preliminarily discussed, and I understand Commissioner King that you may have additional  
21 changes, but we'll show what we modeled. Next slide. If you look at the area that had been  
22 initially moved into D1, included all the way down the river using I-95 as a border. Putting part  
23 of that area back and using 7th as a divider. Next slide. That would result in slightly increasing

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1 deviation above the threshold at 10.03. Next slide.

2 It would also, although it would still have in terms of total population, the total African  
3 American population would still be above 50%, next slide. The voting age population would  
4 drop to 49.01.

5 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Worse.

6 Mr. De Grandy: Now as I said in my initial presentation, there are ways to address that.  
7 To make sure that A, we rebalance District 1 and also bring up the Black VAP. I understand,  
8 Commissioner, that you may actually be looking for less of that area in terms of what the Wharf  
9 is, and when we take a recess, we could work on that better and maybe that would resolve the  
10 problem.

11 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Maybe.

12 Mr. De Grandy: So those are the two changes that have been proposed. Those are the two  
13 changes that we have modeled.

14 Commissioner King: Does that conclude your presentation?

15 Mr. De Grandy: Thankfully, it does.

16 Commissioner King: Gentlemen, are we ready for public comment? Commissioner  
17 Reyes, ready for public comment?

18 Commissioner Reyes: I'm ready.

19 Commissioner King: Okay, public comment is now open. Please line up. Good morning.

20 Katrina Morris: Good morning.

21 Commissioner King: Please go ahead.

22 Katrina Morris: Yeah, I'm gonna cry again. My name is Katrina Morris. I am a resident  
23 of the city of Miami. I want to apologize for my outbursts. I get emotional. My husband would

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1 agree with you. It's really hard to be involved in the process when your voices aren't listened to.  
2 It feels like as a body of residents, it feels like it's the body of residents against our  
3 representatives. That's what's so hurtful. Is that we have come — I spent — I didn't talk to  
4 Commissioner Russell. Okay? I sat on my couch for hours going through public testimony,  
5 writing down things and going, why is the decision been made? Why does the decision been  
6 made? Why does the decision been made? Nobody can comment on it. So, it is hard not to jump  
7 to conclusions about why decisions are being made when they seem like they've been premade  
8 and that the arguments are all in support of the decision. That when the residents come in and say  
9 hey, can you consider us? Then we're told we're activists. I don't know what else to do and so I  
10 jump up and go I'm leaving. Then I go no wait, why should I leave? I'm a resident. I'm the one  
11 you're representing. I don't care if you don't like you and you don't like you and you're mad at  
12 you. We are not poker chips. We are not pawns. We are people. That's all I have to say.

13 Commissioner King: Good morning.

14 Anthony Parrish Jr.: Madam Chair, I'd like to wait until Commissioner Reyes, who I  
15 respect a lot, comes back to the podium cause I'd like to see how he reacts to what I say. Thank  
16 you.

17 John Dolson: John Dolson, 4205 Lennox Drive, Coconut Grove. I stepped out a little  
18 earlier cause I was looking for a shower, wash off after what I saw this morning. Having said that  
19 little sarcastic comment, I had a thing here, which I'm gonna, go ahead and read. Again, I wish  
20 Mr. Reyes was here for me and for many people in this room. This hasn't been about race. This  
21 is about keeping a cohesive community. One of the things I enjoy most about Miami is our  
22 diversity. We're a city for immigrants across the globe who have fled here so the voices can be  
23 heard over the edict of autocratic dictators. I'm stunned we have reached the point where over

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1 23,000 petitioners, hundreds of community members showing 100% opposition to the previous  
2 plan could be ignored. I'm glad to see there's an alternative plan that could keep the Grove  
3 together. Is this what democracy looks like in Miami now? What I saw earlier today is not good.  
4 It's not good at all. We stand here in opposition united one voice, one mission, one Grove, one  
5 representative. The border of US 1. I've got no country to flee to find better representation. This  
6 is where I live. I will not listen again to the rise of characterizations to the citizens. Coconut  
7 Grove is a mere minority of activists and actors as was done on February 25th. I'm pleading with  
8 you to listen to the vocal majority. The issue here is keeping the Grove whole which we fought  
9 for since 1925. We've got NCD overlays. I started working with Village West five years ago on  
10 the NCD revisions because they were the first group to put an NCD 2 in place. I had to go learn  
11 from them how to do it. I value that interaction with Village West and the ability to protect and  
12 preserve our neighborhoods. We get those NCDs and the historic preservation busted up into  
13 their districts and we're gonna have trouble getting our things done that we value. Okay?

14 Commissioner King: Thank you.

15 John Dolson: Okay and we vote and remember when you run for mayor.

16 Commissioner King: He just wanted you to be here. That's all. He just wanted you to  
17 hear. Okay. Ma'am?

18 Mayra Joli: Mayra Joli. I actually enjoy this back and forth and I applaud Carollo to bring  
19 in all in the open. Because hey, I was running for mayor last November and there was a big stink  
20 about me not living in Miami according to some? They commissioned this one and that to bring  
21 me off and rive me through it because they were representing all of you. So now, there is a  
22 question about where everybody is living. Oh, that's so not nice. That the same people that are  
23 supposed to be living in the district they're representing, they're not sure if they are living there

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1 or not. I wonder how many of you are living where you say that you are living, because certainly  
2 Mayra Joli does live in Miami and Mayra Joli does live in Coconut Grove. The same way you  
3 guys can make an argument, you buy and rent, that you live here and you live there. The same  
4 argument can be made, but I'm so glad Joe Carollo, because without Carollo things would be  
5 kind of watching paint dry, trying to see all those hypocrites that they think that they are so polite  
6 just sticking up to the residents. Good luck. Goodbye.

7 Commissioner King: Thank you. Ma'am?

8 Liz Gibson: Hi, my name is Liz Gibson. I live in South Grove on El Prado. I've lived  
9 there probably longer than most of you have been alive. I had a whole thing prepared until the  
10 fiasco started over there. I originally in the last meeting, the firm that was hired to prepare the  
11 redistricting are supposed to come back with a tweak. My question is for this firm, that we, as  
12 taxpayers, paid to prepare this redistricting map. What communication, I don't want everybody  
13 to start screaming, what communication did you receive from Joe Carollo that led to you  
14 redrawing the map in a way that places his home in District 3? Your actions have placed you in  
15 the middle of a lawsuit filed by taxpayers against him. I want to offer them the opportunity to  
16 answer my question on the record today. If you further disrespect the taxpayers who paid for this  
17 new map by refusing to answer, I certainly hope the judge forces you to turn over all the  
18 communication related to this conflict. I would like to yield my time, my remaining time, so that  
19 the question may be answered, but I don't see anybody that's willing to answer it. Thanks.

20 Commissioner King: Thank you. Good morning. Good afternoon.

21 Anthony Parrish Jr.: Good Afternoon. Anthony Parrish Jr. and I live at 3940 Main  
22 Highway in Coconut Grove. I've been a Groveite since 1985. We, you, and all the citizens here  
23 in this chamber are here today because of the Voting Rights Act, the federal Voting Rights Act.



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1 Its purpose is to protect and serve the inalienable rights of citizens to vote for those who will  
2 represent them and have their votes counted equally. Redistricting is one of the main goals of the  
3 Voting Rights Act. But there is sickness in the city of Miami that ask citizens not to vote at all in  
4 local elections. You can get elected or re-elected in Miami's local elections with less than 8% of  
5 the registered voters voting in that election. This sickness is called apathy and it comes from  
6 citizens repeatedly seeing their elected representatives ignoring them and failing to at least listen  
7 to them with respect. There is one neighborhood, one neighborhood, in Miami that does vote in  
8 large numbers and always has and that is Coconut Grove. Now, you commissioners want to  
9 dismember that one unity neighborhood into three districts. My question is why? If you had not  
10 instructed Mr. De Grandy to ignore all of the redistricting proposals, those of us here today and  
11 who were here on March 7th and the more than 2,000 of us who signed the petition, might  
12 believe that you have our best interest at heart. But Mr. De Grandy has repeatedly testified that  
13 he has done exactly what you told him to do. Thus we are left with the conclusion that you  
14 commissioners prefer voter apathy over an engaged passionate and active citizen —

15 Commissioner King: Thank you. Thank you. Next.

16 Male Speaker: Commissioners that I'm happy to say that I can say truthfully to the  
17 commissioners on the dais with respect. Oh, a microphone. I'm happy to say truthfully that I can  
18 say to the commissioners and the manager with respect. I have just a couple of thoughts. I think  
19 that you haven't kept in touch with the public enough in this process. I know you had a bunch of  
20 meetings at the end after basically it was all presented. I think that you might have sunshine  
21 issues, but I don't know enough about it yet. Concerning the visits of your hired consultant to  
22 each of who to find out your priorities is dangerously close to the line I know it.

23 Ms. Méndez: I'm sorry I respectfully disagree with the comment that you have said —

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1 Male Speaker: Okay, fine —

2 Ms. Méndez: — about any type of sunshine lines.

3 Commissioner King: Ma'am. City attorney —

4 Male Speaker: I'm not here to shout with you, but you —

5 Commissioner King: City attorney —

6 Male Speaker: — will remain quiet.

7 Commissioner King: Uh-uh, don't — we're not going to do that.

8 Male Speaker: May I have those seconds refunded? Please.

9 Commissioner King: He stopped the clock. He's very good at that. Go right ahead.

10 Male Speaker: Thank you. I'm not upset with you. I just raised the issue because clearly,  
11 if you don't make the decision correctly today, you're headed to court. I wanna welcome you to  
12 Coconut Grove again this afternoon. We're delighted that Miami puts their City Hall here. I'm  
13 told that downtown has increased in population in the past 10 years by 31,000 and that Coconut  
14 Grove has increased by 1,500 to 2,000. Consequently, I see that it's very reasonable to destroy  
15 Coconut Grove, cut it into a bunch of little chunks. I want to remind you of one thing and then  
16 I'll sit down. Be very, very careful in terms of the future to not use a law that was defined to be  
17 equitable to voters to get your own way. You can't do that. It's just not American. I respect you  
18 so much Commissioner Reyes. Thank you Ms. King.

19 Commissioner King: Thank you.

20 Male Speaker: Thank you very much. Good luck.

21 John Howell: Hi, my name is John Howell. We've been here about 30 years off of  
22 Bayshore. I'm not an activist. A hornet's nest has been kicked. I don't know Ken Russell  
23 personally. Don't know him from Adam. A lifelong Republican. I'm a veteran, but he's popular.

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1 He gets reelected and people like him. What we love about the Grove is we've got crazy hippies  
2 and we've uptight Republicans like me. We get along, little to no crime, great schools. It's a  
3 great place to call home. But this has served us extremely poor. We're way over our skis and as a  
4 Republican, this morning was very uncomfortable. It's all about comity, compassion and  
5 competency. Tread cautiously cause it's a poor decision. Thank you.

6 Commissioner King: Good afternoon.

7 Debbie Dolson: My name is Debbie Dolson, 4205 Lennox Drive, Coconut Grove. I  
8 support one Grove, one voice, and one district with a boundary at US 1. Coconut Grove seems to  
9 be the only neighborhood voicing concerns about these redistricting maps and we're less than  
10 10% of the entire area of Miami. There are alternative redistricting maps that Mr. Grandy has  
11 confirmed meet all the legal requirements. Commissioner Reyes, when you first elected, my  
12 husband and I spoke to you right here, right back there and we welcomed you to the dais and you  
13 told us that your goal was to not be just a commissioner to your district, but of all of Miami.  
14 You've heard the hundreds of public comments and seen over 2,000 signatures opposing the map  
15 that we discussed on the 25th. You've received input via email and seen support from the Miami  
16 Herald to keep the Grove together. What more can we do? Please be true to your word and be a  
17 commissioner that supports Coconut Grove today.

18 Commissioner Reyes: I'm still a commissioner for everybody.

19 Commissioner King: Thank you.

20 Debbie Dolson: Thank you.

21 Commissioner Reyes: That is why —

22 Commissioner King: Commissioner Reyes?

23 Commissioner Reyes: — gonna go with my conscience.

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1 Debbie Dolson: Commissioner King, I watched your YouTube Town Hall. Thank you for  
2 doing that. I would like to comment that your constituent Tuesday is amazing and I hope all the  
3 other Commissioners follow suit. During your meeting, you said we can't cut into Little Haiti,  
4 yet the maps that we previously saw cut into Coconut Grove. You said we have to maintain the  
5 core of the district, yet a core piece of Coconut Grove was being removed. You understand the  
6 importance of community. Please stand with the community of Coconut Grove today. Thank  
7 you.

8 Commissioner King: Thank you.

9 Lynn Fecteau: Hello, my name is Lynn Fecteau. I live at 2542 Swanson Avenue. I've  
10 been a Groveite for 47 plus years. I want to just say falling back into the beginning of this  
11 meeting that Commissioner Carollo just couldn't believe what he did this morning. Our  
12 community deserves better than what he demonstrated today. He deserves to keep historic — we  
13 deserve to keep historic Coconut Grove together. I think they should all listen to the people. Last  
14 time I spoke, Commissioner Carollo got up from his seat and didn't come back till we were  
15 done. Now presently he's missing again and so are almost — well, two of the commissioners. I  
16 really wish that people would come, sit, and listen to us. We listened to what they had to say.  
17 Let's get back to talking about redistricting and let's look at Commissioner Russell's plan. It's  
18 the best plan for the people of Coconut Grove. The hostility of the commissioners against  
19 Commissioner Russell is apparent to all of us. Please don't let this dislike of Commissioner  
20 Russell get in the way of the right vote of Coconut Grove. Do the right thing, vote for one Grove.  
21 Thank you.

22 Pratyush Aggarwal: I have here more than 60 pages of petition signatures. This represents  
23 the voice of over 2,300 people who are in opposition of the current redistricting map that breaks

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1 up Coconut Grove. This has come through awareness generated online, off line, and through  
2 hundreds of conversations with the residents of Miami. This is the work and effort of hundreds  
3 of people to not only sign this petition but also to share with their friends and family to show up  
4 to this meeting today at 10:00 a.m. on a day that is a work day. None of this is easy, but we  
5 really, really, really care. The people who signed this petition represent people all over Miami  
6 not only who are residents. In all of my conversations, discussions, and engagements, I have  
7 come across only four people who are in support of the current map. Three of them sit here in  
8 this Commission and one was a resident I met. I implore you Chairwoman King, please the  
9 Commission moves forward with the vote today and the current map that breaks up Coconut  
10 Grove, you would be indicating that the Commission is not interested in the voices and position  
11 of the residents of Miami. It would be a signal that engagements, petitions, and even making  
12 time on such a day cannot influence this Commission's decisions. It would reflect poorly on the  
13 city's governance and reaffirm the opinions of so many skeptics. I have not received any kind of  
14 funds from anybody and I am proud today to be able to submit these to the Commission. I'm not  
15 connected to any political interests directly or indirectly. The intentions of the residents were  
16 signed as pure opposite to the map being presented today. With that Chairwoman King, I would  
17 like to enter into the public record a copy of this petition and comments for each member of the  
18 Commission. Do I have your permission?

19 Commissioner King: You can give it to the city clerk. Thank you.

20 Mr. Hannon: Chair, if I can just get the speaker's name. Can I have your name for the  
21 record?

22 Pratyush Aggarwal: Pratyush Aggarwal.

23 Mr. Hannon: Thank you, sir.

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Commissioner King: Good afternoon.

Jihad S. Rashid: Good afternoon, my name is Jihad S. Rashid. I live at 2983 Washington Street, Coconut Grove, North Grove. I've been, since my arrival here a community, I don't like to say activist, but I've worked assiduously to make this a better place. I have something to show for. I don't get a lot of credit for it, but I've been responsible for building 45 affordable houses in Coconut Grove and my crowning glory was the Gibson Center that I advocated for. It's very complex here. We do a lot to preserve history, culture. We always recognize Coconut Grove has been foundational to the establishment of the City of Miami and indeed South Florida. We do those things, but my remarks here to draw upon my early civics lessons where in this country we're finding that elected representatives are doing more to appease their lobbyists and to get elected again. I'm very fiercely insistent upon that government for the people, by the people and year in and year out we come here and we're very deferential and respectful to those folks that we send forward to do our bidding. Most often, we defer to their ultimate wisdoms and decisions. Let us not forget that you do what we want you to do. We respectfully ask that and we respectfully do that. Now we have an opportunity to satisfy the issue for balancing the population voting-wise and we have a plan, then we shouldn't have to deliberate much further from that. Everybody can be happy because nobody's in opposition to keeping this place together. So please —

Commissioner King: Thank you.

Jihad S. Rashid: — we —

Commissioner King: Thank you.

Jihad S. Rashid: — ask you insistentlly.

Albert Gomez: Albert Gomez, 3566 Vista Court, 21 year resident of Coconut Grove. I'm

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1 not an activist. I'm an explorer. Okay? Exactly. We're taught respect, brotherhood. I have seen  
2 time and time again cause I'm civically engaged. I care about my city. These two gentlemen are  
3 not at the dais when the public speaks. Those are all just facts. Over and over again, I consider  
4 that disrespect. Because you have to be present, show face. That's what the brotherhood shows  
5 you. They don't and that is just a fact. Now when it comes to the redistricting, there is an option  
6 on the table to keep the Grove together. Yes, there's 114 or so resident, Black residents left, but  
7 that wasn't the case 10 years ago or even 21 years ago when I came to the Grove for the first  
8 time. It's been a descending number over and over again. Also, I live in North Grove. I'm gonna  
9 walk my dog into a new district now. I consider that an assault. I want the Grove together. I learn  
10 from Village West. I learned from Christ King. I go to the West Grove and Village West. We are  
11 one community. For you to lose sight of that and this voice for whatever reason and not listen to  
12 it and make it guide your decisions, disembowels your oath to us. Listen to your constituency. If  
13 you represent at all, act as such. We want one Grove. Keep it that way. Let's keep this legacy  
14 alive. Ultimately, this is your legacy that we will react to based on your decisions. It's your  
15 move. Show me that you wanna keep us together. Thank you.

16 Commissioner King: Good afternoon.

17 Reynold Martin: Good afternoon. Reynold Martin, 3325 Percival Avenue in what they  
18 now call West Grove. My family has been in the West Grove since the 1800s. In fact, my family  
19 members were founders of St. James Baptist Church which was established in 1916 where my  
20 family still attends church. We have been in this community a long time working with every  
21 well-sounding venture that comes to this community establishing, if nothing else, good will with  
22 our friends and neighbors in Coconut Grove. For the Commission to break this community up,  
23 erases or dilutes all the hard work that I and others have diligently attempted to establish in the

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1 great community by our families and friends. I therefore would request that the commissioners of  
2 this great City of Miami consider alternatives to breaking up this historic community that has  
3 been home to Bahamians like myself since the late 1800s. Thank you.

4 Fabio Iannelli: Good afternoon. My name is Fabio Iannelli, 3404 Poinciana Avenue I'm  
5 here representing myself and the Four Way Lodge Homeowner Association of 44 residents. I  
6 wanted to bring it up to the Commission that we eminently oppose the proposed subdivision and  
7 redistricting of Coconut Grove. We are definitely ones for keeping Grove intact. I've been here  
8 for the last 30 years and I think it's very important to maintain the Grove that I met when I first  
9 moved to Miami and have learned to love. I think it's important that the Commission also  
10 consider possibly adding more districts actually which would actually fall more in line with cities  
11 the size of ours and also allow for the new districts to be properly represented. Thank you.

12 Commissioner King: Thank you. Is that thing on?

13 Dwight Bullard: Hey, good afternoon. Senator Dwight Bullard. For the record, I am one  
14 of those activists. I represent an activist organization known as the NAACP. It's been around a  
15 few years. Maybe you've heard of it. I'm the President of the South Dade Branch of the NAACP  
16 and we respectfully cover the area known as Coconut Grove and stand in complete solitary with  
17 all the residents and believe in a one Grove. One thing that was glossed over during the  
18 presentation earlier was the notion of the Voting Rights Act and its desire to maintain what is  
19 called communities of common interest. Right? We recognize that Coconut Grove is a  
20 community of common interest irrespective of race, irrespective of ethnicity, orientation or any  
21 of the other things than the maintenance of that neighborhood as a historic neighborhood within  
22 the City of Miami. Which by the way, is made up of multiple historic neighborhoods, that is  
23 never seems to be like — if we were having this discussion about Liberty City, there'd be



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1 complete outrage and people would be like this is nuts.

2 So, the idea that we're having this discussion about one of Miami's first and most diverse  
3 communities of common interest is appalling. We have to maintain the Grove in its  
4 configuration. We know the historic boundaries. So, let us not argue with semantics about  
5 borders. We know exactly where the Grove is. We know exactly what the Grove has been and it  
6 must be about the maintenance of that. I just wanted to say that we have, as a branch, emailed  
7 each one of the commissioners with our concerns around both District 2 and District 5 and the  
8 maintenance of those historical districts to make sure there is diverse representation in this dais.  
9 Thank you so much.

10 Commissioner King: Thank you.

11 Elliot Durant: Good afternoon, my name is Elliot Durant and I'm here representing the  
12 Coconut Grove Chamber of Commerce. I'm on the Board of Directors representing my President  
13 right here Allen Campbell and the Chairman Monty Trainer. I am probably the only French West  
14 Indian and Bahamian on the Board and I'm also speaking for Ms. Sue McConnell as we find it a  
15 bit disrespectful that a couple of the commissioners are not here to hear us as we heard them.  
16 May I please present this and I'd like to present it to the Commission and give you copies.  
17 Whereas the City of Miami's District 2 has traditionally always included the entirety of Coconut  
18 Grove, whereas the Coconut Grove Chamber of Commerce founded in 1946 and located in the  
19 neighborhood of the City of Miami's Coconut Grove at 3059 Garden Avenue, Miami, 33133 is  
20 within the City of Miami District 2. Whereas the City of Miami City Commission is entertaining  
21 a vote that will break up District 2 into three districts with parts going to District 3 and parts  
22 going to District 4. Whereas there is no clear definitive reason for the purpose of this breakdown  
23 and this breakdown could be constructed as gerrymandering.

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1       Whereas the current District 2 commissioner, Mr. Ken Russell, has indicated the  
2 importance of keeping Coconut Grove within one district, one Grove. Whereas, the Coconut  
3 Grove Chamber of Commerce has always worked closely and supported our City's District 2  
4 commissioners throughout several decades in championing legislation for the entirety of Coconut  
5 Grove, now therefore let it be resolved the Coconut Grove Chamber of Commerce stands by and  
6 endorses the opinion of our District 2 commissioner, Ken Russell, in maintaining Coconut Grove  
7 in one district. I also, on a personal note, my great grandfather is the first Black man to graduate  
8 from the University of Pennsylvania School of Divinity commissioned by President Ulysses S.  
9 Grant to be the founder of the Freedmen's Bureau with Mr. Douglas. This, I'm sure, he's looking  
10 down and wondering why so many years later this is going on. Please keep this Grove together.  
11 As a member of Christ Episcopal Church, as you heard Ms. Gibson, please keep us together.  
12 Thank you.

13       Renee Schafer: Renee Schafer, 2571 Lincoln, Coconut Grove resident for nearly 50  
14 years. I wanna thank you. I think you perceive that we are more than just voters. We are people  
15 who are neighbors, family, and friends. The facts have been represented. Our voices have been  
16 crying out for a week. We ask you to listen to them. We ask you to be our allies as we have voted  
17 and we're hoping you'll reach and do the right thing. Thank you.

18       Steve Gallegly: My name is Steve Gallegly recent resident of Coconut Grove. It just  
19 strikes me that, I don't know, we're afraid to talk about history and bring up history, and that we  
20 just repeat some of the mistakes of the past and where we have power takes from people that are  
21 more powerless and happens, but we're together as a community and working together, that's  
22 when we go forward. But when we separate and then feel that people are not accountable, those  
23 that are supposed to take care of these citizens are not accountable and issues of right and wrong

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1 disappear. I think we have to understand that a lot of — there's historical roots here and we have  
2 to report particularly the most vulnerable in our community and keep the community together.  
3 Answer the question why and talk to people. I don't think that conversation has been carried out.  
4 I don't think it's right to make a change and knowing what a Route 1 is, the difference of a  
5 community to cross, particularly a community that doesn't have maybe all the opportunities to  
6 develop, is just — doesn't make any sense. So I hope you do the right thing and keep the Grove  
7 together. Thank you very much.

8 Commissioner King: Thank you.

9 Cherie Cole: Can I ask a question before I start? I can?

10 Commissioner King: Ask a question. It's all your two minutes.

11 Cherie Cole: On my two minutes? Never mind. Am I allowed to do that?

12 Mr. Hannon: Chair, I could have the person who wants to donate that two minutes to  
13 please come to the podium so they can state their name on the record so we find their speaker  
14 sheet.

15 Female Speaker: [Inaudible].

16 Cherie Cole: Okay, so my question is I see two empty seats. They had a lot to say when  
17 their debate was going on. So I'm wondering where they are and if they will be allowed to vote  
18 on this issue as they decided to leave and not listen?

19 Commissioner King: Commissioner Carollo is not voting and that is why he is not here.

20 Cherie Cole: Okay.

21 Commissioner King: He's voting and he typically watches public comments from his  
22 office.

23 Cherie Cole: Is that customary?

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Commissioner King: That's it. I answered your question.

Cherie Cole: Okay, I apologize.

Commissioner King: I mean, I can't defend him. I just gave you —

Cherie Cole: Okay. Alright, thank you. Thank you so much. I'll get started. My name is Cherie Cole. I live at 2915 Jackson Avenue in Center Grove. I'm a native Miami so I've been here close to 60 years. I've lived in Coconut Grove for 28 and a half years. I'm absolutely opposed to this plan. Ken, thank you for your service and tireless advocacy for our sweet little village. We are grateful. You remind us today it is always best when they go low to go high and I wanna thank you for your professionalism. I am shocked at what I saw here this morning. I've never witnessed anything quite like this. All these accusations going around and I want an investigation. That's not what we're here for. That should have never happened here. So I hope you'll figure out a way to let that never happen again. Our time matters too. I would remind each of you that you are here to serve the voters of the City of Miami. We are seeing this type of redistricting happen all over the country and I would just say I'd question the motives of those who have sought to change our village. Coconut Grove is not broken. It doesn't need to be fixed. In fact, I feel that we're probably a city of little villages that could be a model for the whole country. Look at our beautiful city that we're getting ready to chop up, which I hope we don't. The Grove is unique. It is one of the oldest communities in Miami. There are families that have lived here generational. The Munroe family is one of those families. There's so many families that are like that. There are schools in Coconut Grove that are older than every person in this room. There are churches as well. We support each other and work together as one community. We have a net office that goes out of their way to answer calls, speak to us, hear what — ask us what our issues are and work to solve them. I went into McDonalds on Wednesday, there was

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1 Commissioner Lewis. There were so many officers asking us what we thought. There's a new  
2 vehicle with rainbows for it to be an ally to the LGB community. That is a community and I  
3 question why in the world we would want to break that up. It's just not needed. It's not wanted.  
4 I'd just like I'm so proud of what is happening in Coconut Grove. We are growing and changing.  
5 We're working together. We're advocating for each other. The churches work together. That's a  
6 community. We know each other. If you drive down my street any day at 10:00 or 5:00 p.m. you  
7 will see probably 50 children playing in the park, all different children. They have their little  
8 place that's there. They're playing. They're having picnicking. They're having birthday parties.  
9 Anyone is welcoming. It's a community. This isn't like a joke. It is a community.

10 Commissioner King: Thank you.

11 Cherie Cole: Thank you so much and I hope you'll listen to us.

12 Commissioner King: Thank you. Good afternoon.

13 Barbara Lange: Hi, my name is Barbara Lange. I live 3901 Braganza Avenue, Coconut  
14 Grove and I don't think I can add much to what's already been said, but I'm asking you to please  
15 vote to keep Coconut Grove together. Thank you.

16 Commissioner King: Thank you. Good afternoon.

17 Tina-Gaye Bernard: Tina-Gaye Bernard, 1871 NW South River Drive, Miami River  
18 District, formerly Allapattah. Question: is an erasure of Black history in communities the future  
19 of Miami? That's an open question and it really shouldn't be. What actions would remove that as  
20 a question for this city? Let's briefly revisit a bit of local activity. The City of Miami was  
21 incorporated in 1896; Blacks represented 44% of that vote. The Railroad Shop Colored Addition  
22 was established around 1917 in Allapattah. The neighborhood stands from NW 46th Street to  
23 50th Street, NW 12th Avenue to 14th Avenue. The all-Black community was otherwise

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1 surrounded by an all-white neighborhood.

2 On August 1st, 1947, police sped into Railroad Shop wielding shotguns, putting the  
3 Black families, who owned their land and homes, out into the rain with nowhere to go. It was an  
4 organized effort by the white community who used their political connections to get rid of the  
5 Black neighborhood they felt was too close to their own. White residents lodged complaints with  
6 the City of Miami, and the cities — and the county school board. Both bodies intervened to take  
7 the Black-owned land through eminent domain. The residents of Railroad didn't receive the  
8 privilege nor the courtesy of a curfew warning, seem familiar?

9 This is not the only neighborhood in Miami that has been usurped nor is being gentrified.  
10 From Little Haiti being called Lemon City to Magic City Innovation District to Overtown. This  
11 is not a Miami for everyone as Mayor Suarez likes to erroneously flex, while encouraging socio-  
12 economic disparity and overdevelopment. It's hashtag Miami for gerrymandering. And it must  
13 be stopped. Keep Coconut Grove together. Hashtag one Grove.

14 Commissioner King: Thank you.

15 Johnathon Troubman: Good afternoon, Johnathon Troubman, 2650 Royal Palm Avenue.  
16 Honorable commissioners I don't have a lot to add here and I'm not going to go into the voting  
17 rights issues, all of which have been spoken, quite eloquently too. What I will say as a second  
18 generation Miamian I went to Ransom Everglades Middle School, Ransom Everglades High  
19 School, my family went there as well. This is a community and a place and as I return back home  
20 from 10 years in New York, the Miami I wanted to come back to a community as a place. As I  
21 talked to other people to try to bring startups and corporate entities here to try to make this a  
22 better place they come here because it is a place and it has a history. Please do not destroy that  
23 place and that history. Coconut Grove is the seminal area where Miami was founded. It was

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1 founded by immigrants seeking a better life as many others have come. Please keep that story  
2 and history together. I would ask my fellow citizens who are here to stay for the vote, if they can.  
3 I have given up my day of work to be here. If you think it possible for you to do so, I would just  
4 ask you to do that as well, thank you.

5 Commissioner King: Thank you.

6 Clarice Cooper: Good afternoon, my name is Clarice Cooper. I reside at 3735 Oak  
7 Avenue in beautiful Coconut Grove. I am a native Miamian and a lifelong resident of Coconut  
8 Grove, which is almost 72 years. I'm also the President of the Coconut Grove Village West  
9 Homeowners and Tenants Association also known as HOTA. I'm representing our executive  
10 board to restate our opposition once more to the original and revised versions of the redistricting  
11 plan. Commissioner Russell has offered an alternative, which I think needs to be looked at  
12 because it does keep the Grove together and that's what we're all here about. As a matter of fact  
13 we have a lot of our Coconut Grove residents here who have been at every meeting and it's  
14 beginning to look like these moves to fracture us is intentional. A move such as what's on the  
15 table will affect us negatively as far as some of the goals that we're trying to accomplish, as far  
16 as the NCD2 revisions and also the West Grove CRA. So I will ask that you consider alternatives  
17 in order for the Grove to stay together, because we are one Grove and that's the way we want to  
18 be to take this into perpetuity, thank you.

19 Commissioner King: Thank you.

20 Fleta Stamen: Good afternoon, my name is Fleta Stamen; I'm at 3078 Aviation Avenue,  
21 Coconut Grove. I'm here today to say please preserve one Grove community. I'm a native of  
22 Miami, Florida and I've lived in the Grove for over 30 years. What I can tell you is that Coconut  
23 Grove defines what a community is. I was stunned to find out through our representatives here

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1 that one alternative was proposed for redistricting and it essentially destroys a community that  
2 has been together for a century and a half. That is not representing us. So I am asking you to  
3 reconsider, I understand March 11th is not a deadline, so why we're rushing through this process  
4 I do not understand. This community needs some attention and time to consider alternatives,  
5 which have not been presented. I don't understand why that did not happen. I am asking you to  
6 consider voting against this, and in proposal preserve our community and give our community  
7 enough time to review and respond to any such proposal reasonably.

8 Commissioner King: Thank you.

9 Jennifer Pflieger: Hi, can you hear me? Okay, my name is Jennifer Pflieger, I am a native  
10 Miami resident, I currently live at 3834 Kent Court in the South Grove. We've been there for  
11 four years. I'm not an activist. This is the first time I've actually spoken in a public forum like  
12 this, but I just wanted to say I've owned homes in the Gables, Pinecrest and now in the Grove  
13 and of all these neighborhoods my family and I find that Coconut Grove is our absolute favorite,  
14 it's a true gem. We are proud to live in a diverse and unique landscape, but more importantly, we  
15 are proud to live in a neighborhood with diverse and unique residents who are also passionate  
16 and care about their historical neighborhood. From secret garden tours walking, historical tours  
17 outreach and support of the West Grove churches and children's programs, residents who are  
18 involved in enhancing the Commodore Trail, not only for Coconut Grove but for the greater  
19 visitors in Miami. Special events at the Barnacle, residents who put on the Gifford Lane Art  
20 Stroll for neighbors to attend and enjoy these are just a few examples of what makes Coconut  
21 Grove unique and the community that it is. Respectfully, I think that Vice-Chairman Carollo's  
22 prior comments and attacks on Commissioner Russell were inappropriate and are not relevant as  
23 to why I am here. I'm here today regarding the item on the agenda, which is the redistricting of



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1 Coconut Grove. I'm opposed to splitting it into different districts. I would like to see it remain as  
2 one Grove with the historical boundary of US 1 staying as it is and keeping the West Grove  
3 intact. Following Commissioner Russell's plan, his plan makes sense and P.S.; I've never met  
4 Ken Russell before. The residents have indicated that they'd like to stay together as a community  
5 just as they are now. They've shown up over and over to make their voice heard despite the  
6 rushed push to change the boundaries with little transparency and giving little voice to residents.  
7 My friends in the North Grove who are being removed have no idea this was happening. As  
8 Commissioner Reyes just said, we don't need any more division. I implore the Commissioners to  
9 keep Coconut Grove cohesive and —

10 Commissioner King: Thank you.

11 Jennifer Pflieger: — as one.

12 Commissioner King: Thank you.

13 Miriam Merino: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Miriam Merino, I live in District 2, I  
14 lived in Coconut Grove for 9 years, but now I live in Brickell, but it's still my district and I love  
15 Coconut Grove. If I could move back to Coconut Grove, I would. I've always been happy and  
16 pleased to see the incredible union in the Coconut Grove community. No matter what age you  
17 are, what are your likes or what you're looking for or what you look like. The Grove is one of the  
18 most unique jewels that we have in our city and should be an example for any other city to try to  
19 have this incredible union of community and love for each other. I don't understand why this  
20 splitting makes any sense to any of the commissioners. Destroying something that is working  
21 should never be in the focus of our representatives. I was at home streaming all of this and it got  
22 me so upset when I heard many comments here of the defamation of character accusations  
23 without any base our attorney allowing it and Mrs. King allowing it too. So I had to get dressed

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1 and come here. Mr. Reyes, you said twice that you would vote any which way as long as you  
2 would keep that seat on. So are you voting to keep that seat or are you voting for the people —  
3 let me finish —

4 Commissioner Reyes: Wait, wait, wait.

5 Miriam Merino: Let me finish. Let me finish.

6 Commissioner King: Commissioner Reyes.

7 Miriam Merino: For the people that you are supposed to be representing as a  
8 commissioner for the City of Miami? You already see everybody here complaining. You know,  
9 that we have over 2,000 signatures. What you guys are proposing is not what we want and you  
10 are supposed to represent us, but I question what you said twice, that you are going to vote either  
11 way as long as you keep that seat saved. So then what do you mean by that?

12 Commissioner Reyes: Let me —

13 Commissioner King: Commissioner Reyes, Commissioner —

14 Commissioner Reyes: Let me, no, no, let me —

15 Miriam Merino: I want an answer. In my two minutes. Like he represents me, I want an  
16 answer.

17 Commissioner Reyes: Let me answer and you are very aggressive. Let me tell you this.  
18 You see, one thing that I want to make clear, I want to keep that clear, but one thing now that I  
19 have the microphone.

20 Miriam Moreno: I still have my two minutes.

21 Commissioner Reyes: I have the microphone now, you asked me and I'm gonna answer.  
22 One thing that really amazes me, nobody here cares that we chop up Shenandoah in seven pieces,  
23 nobody cares that we chop Silver Bluff, and all the other good neighborhoods that they have

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1 been solid and been neighborhoods that have been in the city of Miami for a long, long time.  
2 Nobody cares about that as long as you keep Coconut Grove. And one thing is misrepresented  
3 here. It is that we are destroying Coconut Grove, by going to any other district Coconut Grove  
4 ceased to exist. You see, that sliver is not gonna go to Shenandoah or to Flagami, what we're  
5 trying to do is to maintain diversity and trying to do whatever is right. And you should  
6 understand that Coconut Grove or any other neighborhoods that are part of the city of Miami  
7 have been cut in half and in three or four pieces in order to maintain diversity. And that is my  
8 point. I am gonna vote for what is best for the City of Miami. I am gonna vote my conscience,  
9 okay.

10 Miriam Merino: [Inaudible] just to pick up seats.

11 Commissioner King: Ma'am, ma'am.

12 Commissioner Reyes: No, I said, I am gonna keep that seat and if by — any other plan  
13 weakens, weakens, and listens to this, weakens the possibility or the probability that that seat  
14 [pointing to Commissioner King] is gonna be there ten years from now I would vote against that,  
15 okay.

16 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you.

17 Commissioner Reyes: That answers your question. Okay.

18 Commissioner King: Thank you. Go ahead.

19 Kathy Parks: Hello, you muted me too. Hi, my name is Kathy Parks, Kathy Suarez, and a  
20 whole lot of other things. I've even been — I'm known as a reverse racist. No, none of that stuff  
21 had to go on this morning, but it did and there is partisan issues being brought to the dais, things  
22 that don't belong and thanks to the Chairwoman, she has a really good way of squelching this.  
23 The hypocrisy, Coconut Grove used to be one Grove, and I am for one Grove. I am not for

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1 splitting up Coconut Grove so don't misinterpret what I'm saying. We were never North Grove,  
2 South Grove, Center Grove, and then West Grove, not East Grove, it's West Grove. So you  
3 might as well go back and the CRA map is a red border they couldn't even use blue or yellow.  
4 That's insulting, as an activist for that, community, I have spent many, many, many dollars of  
5 my own and my brothers, who don't live here, because we grew up here, and our mother taught  
6 us we all bleed red. We're all the same, but we're putting focus in the wrong direction. We have  
7 a people problem, whether it's too many people, or everybody's angry nowadays since we've  
8 had COVID. This racism, what most of you in this room don't understand, and I will never  
9 understand, because I am not brown or black, but if you don't have that skin color you don't get  
10 it all the way. You don't understand what life is like for them. You don't understand the things  
11 they live with and Commissioner Reyes has been very helpful as the other commissioners were  
12 when a historic designation was being forced upon, even some Black homeowners. This has to  
13 stop, people have rights, but we've gone backwards we're not people we're all about —

14 Commissioner King: Thank you.

15 Kathy Parks: — another alphabet. This has got to stop. You didn't let us speak today if  
16 you were planning on going all in.

17 Commissioner King: Thank you.

18 Kathy Parks: Thank you.

19 Len Scinto: Hi, thanks, my name is Len Scinto and I live at 3091 Bird Avenue. I will be  
20 about 20-feet out of District 2 if the current plan goes. I, for many years, was a member of the  
21 Village of Center Grove Neighborhood Association and whether this changes the Grove or not, if  
22 nothing else, it's really demoralizing, it's really demoralizing to the spirit of the community  
23 activism we put into our neighborhood. So I'd ask you to think about Commissioner Russell's

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1 plan keeping the Grove, one Grove, but I just want to say one thing about the spirit of the  
2 neighborhood and some examples of that is how everyone else benefits from it. So we just had  
3 the Gifford Lane Art Stroll last Sunday. That locally produced event earned about \$8,000. That  
4 \$8,000 is split for two charities, the Saint Stephen's AIDS Ministry and then the Saint Alban's  
5 Child Enrichment Center. The larger community benefits from the spirit of Coconut Grove. Just  
6 don't demoralize that. Thank you.

7 Commissioner King: Thank you.

8 Denise Galvez Turros: I guess its afternoon. Good afternoon, thank you three for staying  
9 for public comments. I think that we have to appreciate that because considering how much of  
10 our time is wasted and I appreciate that you three stayed here to listen to us. My name is Denise  
11 Galvez Turros. I live at 2130 SW 20th Street. I actually reside in District 4 with Manolo Reyes,  
12 Commissioner Reyes, but I work every day in District 3. And I am not at all here to cause any  
13 more controversy. I just want to point out that I don't live in the Grove, yet I still have a  
14 perspective. I think that this whole process has been mishandled, I think it has been rushed.  
15 There's no upcoming elections. I don't understand why we can't see other alternatives at this  
16 point and try to build more consensus in the community. We defer things all the time here on this  
17 dais that are super important, yet it still happens. I'm only asking that you please consider other  
18 alternatives and perhaps postpone this vote. I'm so glad Carollo is no longer gonna be involved  
19 in the vote because if he would have been, it would have immediately had cause for action to go  
20 to court. He clearly was conflicted out. So I'm happy that happened and I congratulate him for  
21 doing that. Please consider postponing this vote until we have seen other alternatives that unite  
22 us and yes, keeps the Grove together.

23 Yanelis Valdes: Good afternoon, my name is Yanelis Valdes and I'm part of an

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1 organization called Engage Miami who focuses on civic engagement and civic education. I'm  
2 also a resident of District 2. And I've been here showing up alongside other District 2 residents,  
3 specifically Coconut Grove residents, since February, to learn, understand the redistricting  
4 process here in the city. How it will impact us and to have our voices heard. I'm really heartened  
5 as a community organizer, as a City of Miami resident, to see so many people show up  
6 consistently because we care deeply about the issue. Not because we're here trying to perform  
7 but because it is an issue that affects us and we care. And we should be really open and welcome  
8 to that civic engagement and so my ask for you all is to please continue to have a space where  
9 folks can come and speak and it be really well received. I think some of the ways in which we've  
10 interacted with one another hasn't always been positive and so I just really want to encourage  
11 dialogue with residents and making sure that we have a space that really allows for civic  
12 engagement in a really robust way. And I also want you to consider the alternative plans for  
13 redistricting that really keeps Coconut Grove together in District 2, and also keeps the portions of  
14 District 5 together that should be together so thank you so much for your time.

15 John Snyder: Hello, my name's John Snyder, I live at 3980 Hardie Avenue. I represent  
16 the South Grove Neighborhood Association. I want to talk about two things that are in the code  
17 and I think need to be considered. Making decisions is greatly influenced by the constraints that  
18 are put on it. First, Miami 21 code emphasizes the importance of neighborhoods in the  
19 development of Miami, but the consultant was told to give preserving neighborhoods the very  
20 least weight in making redistricting decisions. The intent Section 2.1.2 says, Miami 21 code is  
21 intended to advance the interests of conservation and development. A) Conservation goals  
22 include: 1) preserving neighborhoods. Thus, the foremost goal of the Miami 21 code was  
23 directed by the Commission, this Commission to be given the very least weight in making

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1 decisions about redistricting we think that was an error. 2) Redistricting is necessitated by  
2 population growth in the city. Population has increased by 28.8% since the year 2000, we think  
3 these additional citizens deserve representation. Yet, the consultant was told not to increase the  
4 number of districts. There have been five districts since I came to Miami in 1985, having  
5 increasing numbers of constituents means that too often the governed are given short shrift,  
6 Miami shrift, the Miami Charter in Section A says: —

7 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you.

8 John Snyder: Says this government been created to protect the governed not the  
9 governing. Thank you.

10 Commissioner King: Thank you.

11 Penny Tannenbaum: Hi, My name is Penny Tannenbaum, I live at 1826 Fairhaven Place  
12 in Coconut Grove. I also have a daughter, Mr. Reyes that lives in your district. She lives at 2301  
13 SW 23rd Terrace. She has intellectual disabilities. We bought the house there so we could  
14 provide affordable housing for her and two other people with intellectual disabilities. They pay  
15 \$700 to \$800 a month in rent, we basically subsidize the rest of it. I really would like you and  
16 your district to stay focused on that district. There's been a lot of good things that have been  
17 happening, trees have been planned, traffic aids have been planned because people would zoom  
18 there that are going south of the city. It's mostly single-family homes. I would like to see more  
19 affordable housing. Lots of them are being knocked down. We need to make sure the codes are  
20 followed. I worry if you take on the area on the other side of US 1 there's gonna be high-rises  
21 that want to come in and lots of developers all that kind of stuff. It's gonna lose the focus, that's  
22 really important for that neighborhood which is still relatively affordable. I also don't want you  
23 to think that nobody cares about the other side of US 1. I really care about what's going on in

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1 Coral Way. It's kinda pretty sad, a lot of the businesses are open. The city needs to try and  
2 revitalize Coral Way. The Grove looks great downtown now, but Coral Way doesn't. I also want  
3 to keep the Grove together. It's really important for us. I also have a question, which is for all of  
4 you and the consultants. Is there a way, have you modeled, if you do what Commissioner Russell  
5 has suggested and what Commissioner King has suggested. Can they both be done?

6 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you.

7 Penny Tannenbaum: Oh, I have one more thing —

8 Commissioner King: Thank you. Go ahead.

9 Nathaniel Robinson III: Good morning, Reverend Nathaniel Robinson III is my name.  
10 I'm the senior pastor of Greater Saint Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in West Coconut  
11 Grove. It's been there for 126 years. I'm also the chair of Grove Rights and Community Equity  
12 Inc. Other communities are being affected by redistricting. That's been well stated here. But  
13 another fact is they're not here advocating to keep their community together and Coconut Grove  
14 is. I hope that will be considered. I really wanted to talk a little bit about how displacement of  
15 people from a district is, displacement of votes from a district and how this Commission has  
16 voted legislation into the record that has displaced people of color from West Coconut Grove for  
17 years. All the way back from major use special permits that led to evictions and displacement of  
18 people from the district. Now this redistricting plan will move more people of color from the  
19 district. It's unfortunate that the consultant's plan has presented that less than 500 Black  
20 residents live in West Coconut Grove and a simple peek or glance at the latest census data will  
21 show that number is significantly skewed. And I hope that the Commission will take that into  
22 consideration as well. Really, what I wanted to say is that an alternative map that meets all of the  
23 criteria has been presented, and the people are satisfied with them. Alternative maps have been



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1 presented that meet all of the criteria and the people, the residents, are satisfied with them.  
2 Alternative maps that meet all of the criteria have been presented and the residents are satisfied  
3 with them. Alternative maps that meet all of the criteria have been presented and the people who  
4 live here are satisfied with them. Thank you.

5 Commissioner King: Thank you.

6 Cindy Snyder: Hi, my name is Cindy Snyder and I live at 3980 Hardie Road. I was very  
7 interested to see this new rendition of the redistricting map that was presented today for the first  
8 time and that looks like that has a lot of promise. It keeps Coconut Grove together, it goes with  
9 the concept of keeping neighborhoods intact. When my husband and I came here when he had an  
10 opportunity for a job and higher education we looked very carefully at Miami. We looked around  
11 various places. Coconut Grove was the place that most spoke to us. We enjoyed the historic  
12 aspect of it, we enjoyed the tree canopy and those features. We're from the Northeast and a lot of  
13 people are from the Northeast. Anyway, different people from different areas gravitate towards  
14 different things. We love the history of Coconut Grove. We hope that it will stay together. We  
15 think that it would be tragic if it were lost. Thank you.

16 Commissioner King: Thank you. Good afternoon.

17 Elena Carpenter: Good afternoon, Elena Carpenter, 1660 South Bayshore Court. Up until  
18 the '90s, all those seats that you fill right now, they were at large. And like Commissioner Reyes  
19 said, and thank you for staying. He said, he said he represents all of Miami, at the time that was  
20 supposed to be the case, and thank you for staying Madame Chair. You need to be here. The City  
21 of Miami was sued and based on that lawsuit the mayor created a blue ribbon committee that  
22 districted the City of Miami. I ended up being appointed by the mayor to be part of that blue  
23 ribbon committee together with many, many powerful, important, smart people, smarter than me.

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1 Like Mr. De Grandy, Al de Cárdenas, Al Dotson, many, many people. We hired consultants and  
2 created five districts. What was the basis of the whole exercise, one man, one vote. Equity,  
3 equitable representation and we were in the business of preserving communities. Not splitting  
4 them apart and destroying them. I'm not gonna repeat what everybody else here said today. I'm  
5 gonna tell ya, 1925 the Grove was here. If anything, we deserve historic designation as a district  
6 please. Keep the Grove with reasonable subdivisions like US 1 cutting us off. At least for the  
7 next 10 years and then we can talk about it again. Thank you for your time, bless you.

8 Commissioner King: Thank you. Good afternoon.

9 Lucian Ferster: Thank you. Good afternoon Commissioners, my name is Lucian Ferster. I  
10 live on Crawford Avenue on the south Grove. I've lived there since 1983. Like everyone else  
11 that's spoken for the past three sessions I'm strongly in favor of keeping Coconut Grove as one  
12 unit politically. It is one unit spiritually, historically in a neighborhood sense. There has been an  
13 alternate plan presented. It makes sense, it makes sense for the people in this room, all who have  
14 spoken. It makes sense for the City of Miami. When I look at the alternate plan and the original  
15 plans modified. I think of Robert Kennedy. Robert Kennedy once famously said, Robert  
16 Kennedy, God rest his soul. "People ask why, I want to ask why not?" We have an alternate plan  
17 it is suitable. On all levels, why not implement the alternate plan? If any of the opposing  
18 commissioners can answer that question, why not? God love 'em. But they can't do it. So there  
19 are other reasons we don't know them. We don't have to articulate them; the alternate plan  
20 works for us. It works for you commissioners, respectfully. It works for our city. Implement the  
21 alternate plan, thank you and thank you for listening to us.

22 Commissioner King: Thank you, good afternoon.

23 Robert Deresz: My names, Robert Durre, Bob Deresz, I reside at — I've been living at

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1 — well since '94 at 200 SE 15th Road. I've been a Groveite, District 10, owned a home in the  
2 Grove years ago, since 1970. My current residence is under contract. I don't want to move from  
3 there but I don't want to be part of the 20% that doesn't sign and gets nothing. I sign a contract to  
4 get almost 2 1/2 times as much as my condos currently worth and they're allowing me to stay  
5 there for free for six months. I hope that doesn't get me into a lot of trouble. I want to thank you  
6 Mrs. King, I know you've been in a rough position here. You've done a wonderful job. I think  
7 for a couple of minutes there I think you were actually interrupting Mr. Ken Russell, but I don't  
8 think you did that purposefully. It's Senator Russell, excuse me. I'm not gonna spend time here  
9 talking about what's probably going on underneath someplace. You know, like why Mr. Russell,  
10 meeting after meeting talks about West Grove and I hear from these gentlemen, what do you  
11 mean by West Grove? Wouldn't they have figured it out by now? If they were trying to  
12 accomplish this to where they're, helping the constituents you would think they would try to  
13 understand what the boundaries, or whatever. I want to take a moment just to say what a  
14 wonderful thing this is to have so many white, non-Hispanic, white people to come out month  
15 after month to try to keep their Black neighbors from being moved away and taken away from  
16 their homes. I mean where you see that, oh please. I think I see a few hippies out there.

17 Commissioner King: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Good afternoon.

18 Cynthia Shelley: Hi, my name is Cynthia Shelley. I live at 2975 Washington Street. I've  
19 been there since 1981, I own my own home. I came to Coconut Grove from Winter Park,  
20 Florida. My business brought me down here. I am one of those crazy activists, hippie whatever,  
21 artists and I had a professional business and it did very well. I came from Winter Park and  
22 they've managed to hold themselves together with their codes and keep their people very happy.  
23 There wasn't a fight like I found when I came down to Coconut Grove. It has been very unusual

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1 for me to be standing in front of a bunch of people, representatives and trying to get across what  
2 my neighbors and what my friends need to hold their zone together. To be represented for what  
3 their needs are. I am one of the founders of the Coconut Grove Park Homeowners Association,  
4 past president of the Civic Club, and vice-president of the Coconut Grove Elementary PTA, et  
5 cetera. I am very involved in the preservation of Coconut Grove and what the people in Coconut  
6 Grove want. I am one of those folks who believes in We the People, By the People, for the  
7 People and you lovely people have your seats here because you represent us and our needs. We  
8 trust you and we trust that you hear us, that you understand that we've come together, in this  
9 short amount of time, we have managed to gather at least 2,000 votes and this has been a short  
10 amount of time that we have found —

11 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you.

12 Cynthia Shelley: — that we have found ourselves in this situation, thank you.

13 Commissioner King: Thank you.

14 David Winker: Good afternoon, David Winker. I live at 2222 SW 17th Street. I am in  
15 Commissioner Manolo Reyes' district. I am a very happy constituent of his. I represent one  
16 Grove, an ad hoc group of Grove residents advocating to preserve the Grove's unique history and  
17 culture. Mr. De Grandy made it clear that the decision to break up District 3 is not necessary but  
18 rather a policy decision. A policy decision of this Commission. It is important to note that not a  
19 single resident in three public comments before this Commission nor in the district meetings that  
20 have occurred over the last couple of weeks, voiced support for this plan, not one. The people  
21 you elected don't want this plan. It is you the commissioners that are deciding to break up the  
22 Grove, against the wishes of the residents that elected you. So if the residents aren't driving this,  
23 it begs the question, what is happening? Why is this happening? Not one policy reason has been

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1 given to support breaking up the Grove. What we are left with is commissioners doing this to  
2 benefit themselves, which is not acceptable and I'll conclude with this. We ask again that you  
3 listen to the residents rather than breaking up this historic neighborhood. We need to add  
4 commissioners to service the population growth. So please consider that, thank you.

5 Commissioner King: Thank you.

6 James Torres: Good afternoon Commissioners, James Torres, President of the DNA. I'm  
7 gonna yield my time to Mel from The Grove, because it's more a Grove meeting than anything  
8 else and Happy Birthday coming soon I heard.

9 Mel Meinhardt: Madame Chairman I'm Mel Meinhardt from Virginia Street. Thank you  
10 for letting us have this exercise in representative democracy. I want to give a special shout out to  
11 you ma'am and to Commissioner Russell for putting together town hall meetings that reached  
12 out and brought together, in your case ma'am not just the people you faced in person, but also  
13 through the YouTube you rammed out I think about 200 people right now. A great example of  
14 bringing people together. Listening to your constituents and listening to the people of others.  
15 We've had representatives at all the commissioner town halls and by far and away, the other  
16 town halls had a total of about twelve people attend those. On the 7th of February, we were  
17 presented the first draft by Mr. De Grandy. Mr. Russell, representing more than 100,000  
18 residents of the City of Miami, asked for discussion on that matter, among the other members on  
19 the dais that went no further, the members, and you can check the video, other than yourself  
20 ma'am, literally turned their backs on the 100,000 residents of the City of Miami represented by  
21 Mr. Russell. You ma'am tried to engage the other commissioners and asked them to have some  
22 kind of dialogue about the plan that had been done. They remained standing with their faces  
23 away from you and made little motions for you to go away because they did not want to

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1 represent or discuss the matter before them. Ma'am I would offer to you that that is not  
2 representative democracy in any way, shape, or form. Subsequently, we have seen town halls, we  
3 have seen people here before us, we have seen organizations like the Miami Herald, the NAACP,  
4 the ACLU, the Village of Center Grove, all kinds of elected organizations. We've had the  
5 Shenandoah neighborhood come and both in Districts 3 and Districts 4 approach us and say how  
6 we can make this an opportunity ma'am. An opportunity to undo the compounding errors that  
7 Commissioner Carollo described to us last time he was here. When he was part of the effort to  
8 create these districts just described Ms. Carpenter. Ma'am, this is a fantastic opportunity for  
9 these Commissioners, you ma'am and your peers to undo the compounding problems that have  
10 occurred here in the City of Miami. We can get ahead of this. Mr. De Grandy has testified or at  
11 least stated several times that it is possible to reunify the neighborhoods previously broken up. In  
12 all the districts and still satisfy the Federal Election Commission guidelines and preserve five  
13 districts. Doggone it the Commissioner of Elections Christina White for the county has said very  
14 explicitly that there is no requirement that the City of Miami complete this process by the 11th of  
15 March. Absolutely none. She has advised in fact that we would be well served to take the time to  
16 do this right and use the opportunities presented to us by this once every ten-year opportunity.  
17 We ma'am, you ma'am have the leadership and the opportunity to create a government  
18 structured for Miami that exists now that can face the population, the environmental problems  
19 that we are all facing. Thank you ma'am.

20 Commissioner King: Thank you, thank you.

21 Alexander Moskovitz: To the Chair, commissioners who have been kind enough to stay  
22 and actually listen to the citizens of Miami during the public comment and fellow Miami  
23 residents. My name is Alexander Moskovitz, 2185 South Bayshore Drive. In the very strange

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1 gerrymandered portion of Coconut Grove that would be moved from District 2 to District 3 and  
2 disappointed about having seen, frankly the leadership, demonstrated this morning by  
3 Commissioner Carollo in his opening comments, which were clearly off topic. While I  
4 understand, the need for redistricting is mandated and necessary I am against the currently  
5 proposed changed district lines or would like to recommend the alternative proposal by  
6 Commissioner Russell. I don't know if it's mutually exclusive with the alternatives that have  
7 also been presented, by you Chairwoman King, but if they work together, that's wonderful as  
8 well. My concerns as been voiced by many of the citizens here are splitting up of the contiguous  
9 Coconut Grove neighborhood, which has been in existence, first as its own City starting in 1919,  
10 then incorporated, annexed into Miami as of 1925. For the last 103 years, it has remained a  
11 consistent character within the City and I don't understand why gerrymandering it is necessary.  
12 If past neighborhoods have been split as you had raised, yeah, that's a problem, and maybe as the  
13 gentleman before me had suggested this is an opportunity for this Commission to in fact re-  
14 evaluate this. If it hadn't been done before and there's not actually a firm deadline of March  
15 11th. I don't understand why more time isn't given. While the opportunity might be to have  
16 three —

17 Commissioner King: Thank you.

18 Alexander Moskovitz: Okay, thank you.

19 Rose Pujol: Good Afternoon Commissioners, everyone here and City of Miami. My  
20 name is Rose Pujol. I reside at 2455 South Bayshore Drive. I felt it was important to be here and  
21 urge the commissioners to take the time and do this right. This is so important I actually spoke to  
22 people in Tampa in the clerk's office and in Atlanta. I was fascinated by the process and how  
23 they have, in Atlanta, they are going on the third round. They will complete the process by July

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1 1st. In Tampa, they're going to complete the process of redistricting by June 10th. What I find  
2 that is critical is that we stay as one Grove and it's important not just for those of us that live  
3 here, but for the City of Miami to preserve the history of the City of Miami. Again, I urge you to  
4 please consider extending this and looking at the options so that we all benefit by the decision  
5 you make, thank you very much.

6 Commissioner King: Thank you.

7 Sue McConnell: I'm the last one. My name is Sue McConnell. I live at 3090 Virginia  
8 Street. As I said last week, I, for about 10 years, I went to every Commission meeting there was  
9 until the pandemic and I watch it on TV, I saw yesterday where they were trying to push  
10 something through and one of the commissioners said, well we can do that and the other one  
11 said, well that won't happen until tomorrow. Which indicated to me that they were pretty sure  
12 the way that they were going to vote before listening to us again? I resent the fact when people  
13 call me an activist. I don't think I'm an activist. I think I'm somebody who cares Coconut Grove  
14 as a community is a family. We don't always agree on things. Like development or parking, or  
15 our roads, trees or whatever. We're a family, we come together and for that reason, I think that  
16 this is a very good showing and I appreciate everyone that's been here. I know Manolo Reyes for  
17 a while and it's not a personal thing. It's not that we don't want you as our commissioner.

18 Commissioner Reyes: Well that's what people have said.

19 Sue McConnell: Well I mean really, it's not.

20 Commissioner Reyes: How do you want me to take it, I don't want to be there, you see.

21 Sue McConnell: But thank you, thank you.

22 Commissioner King: Thank you.

23 Sue McConnell: Thank you.



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Commissioner King: Thank you.

Commissioner Reyes: Thank you ma'am.

Commissioner King: This meeting is going to be in recess so we can take a break.

Commissioner Russell: Chair, if I may, just for the record. We're going to close the public comment period.

Commissioner King: We're closing the public comment period and we are going to take a recess for an hour. We will resume at 2:30.

Commissioner Russell: Procedural question Madame Chair. Because I remember Mr. De Grandy saying something about if there are any changes to be made that you want to take a break to work on changes and then bring something back for us to vote on? Was that correct?

Mr. De Grandy: Yes, that's correct. Other than what we've modeled so far, which is readily available, if there are additional changes, we would need to actually do them in the software program. It is my understanding that Chair King may want to make additional changes to her proposal, so I would need the time to sit down with her, work through that, show the statistics, validate the legality of a plan, et cetera.

Commissioner Russell: Madam Chair would it make sense to give him that direction now so that he has the lunch break to work on those changes if they exist?

Commissioner King: I'm merely asking him to restore my district. He took part of my district out and I want him to give it back. He understands.

Commissioner Russell: I know that feeling.

Mr. De Grandy: Well, but what I'd like to do as I said—

Commissioner King: Well, he wants to sit down and tell me what the ramifications of giving me back what was —

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Commissioner Russell: Oh, you need to be with him before that.

Commissioner King: Right, he wants to meet with me.

Commissioner Russell: Then let's take the break. I misunderstood. I thought you had your changes ready that you knew what you wanted.

Commissioner King: Right, right, no and I need — public comment has been closed. I said public comment has been — public comment has been closed.

Commissioner Reyes: Let her speak.

Commissioner King: Commissioner Reyes would like you to speak you have your two minutes.

Commissioner Reyes: Ma'am, ma'am?

Commissioner King: Where is she going?

Commissioner Reyes: Ma'am? I want to hear what you have to say, I think everybody wants to say it. I want to hear, everybody.

Raissa Fernandez: Good afternoon, thank you so much, Raissa Fernandez, 992 NW 5th Street, Miami. I am in District 3 and I am a native born of this city. And I join my fellow neighbors of the Grove on this issue because I don't think that it's fair to draw little circles and add up to a neighborhood. Shenandoah is right next to Little Havana. We can go west, we can go north, we can go south. Even Overtown has more to do with Little Havana because we share the river, we share Spring Garden, on these issues that faces our neighborhood. And I don't agree when I hear — I was just listening to it from all the way to the house and praying I didn't have to go to work so I could come over here, because I refuse to accept that people from Little Havana don't care and that's why they're not on this meeting. And we do, and we do, right? But my constituents and my friends and my neighbors, they're working, they're working hard residents

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1 of this neighborhood. And I love the Grove. I ride every day from Little Havana to the Grove  
2 because it's the best. I went to Gifford Lane Art Stroll because that's the funk of the Grove. So  
3 please make sure that when you think about what you're doing today it's going to be good for the  
4 rest of our residents, thank you, and thank you for the time.

5 Commissioner King: Thank you.

6 Commissioner Reyes: Thank you ma'am.

7 Commissioner King: Public comment is closed. So we're going to recess now for an hour  
8 and we'll be back.

9 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Is an hour going to be enough madam Chair?

10 Commissioner King: You don't think so?

11 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: No, I don't think so.

12 Commissioner Russell: This is the lunch break, yeah?

13 Commissioner King: It's a lunch break, it's —

14 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: If you want to restore your district as you said, I heard  
15 you, that's why I came out.

16 Commissioner King: Yes, I'm going to restore it.

17 Commissioner Díaz de la Portilla: Then I want to hear, I want to give him time to restore  
18 it.

19 Commissioner King: Okay.

20 Commissioner Russell: Good to see you.

21 Commissioner King: Yes, I gotta put —

22 Mr. Hannon: Chair, what time will we be back?

23 Commissioner King: 3 o'clock.



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